CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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IBC WORLD NEWS
CH ABC
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2 fuel tankers burst into flames in Iraqi waters P9

RCB to face SRH in IPL 2026 opener on March 28 in Bengaluru P10

P12 Hansika and Sohael Khaturiya officially get divorced

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STRAIT A 'TOOL TO CHOKE' ENEMIES!

In first public statement, Iranian Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei declared the Strait of Hormuz should remain closed as a tool of pressure; calls for retaliation for every death; Mojtaba Khamenei defied calls by Trump and global markets to reopen the vital oil trade route.

TEHRAN

Iran's newly-appointed Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei has declared that the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global shipping route, will remain closed, calling it a "tool of pressure" amid ongoing conflict with the United States and Israel.

In a message read out by a Iran state TV broadcaster, he urged unity among the Iranian people and warned that all US bases in the region must be shut down "or they will be attacked."

Khamenei vowed to avenge the deaths since the start of war, saying it would remain among his top priorities.

"A limited amount of this revenge has so far taken concrete form, but until it is fully achieved, this case will remain among our priorities," AFP quoted Khamenei as saying. Khamenei warned that the US and Israel would have to pay "compensation" for their actions, though he did not name the countries directly, referring to them only as "the enemy."

"We will ask for compensation from the enemy. If we can't get compensation from the enemy, we will destroy their properties as much as they have destroyed ours," Khamenei was quoted as saying.

IRAN'S 3 CONDITIONS FOR PEACE
Talking to leaders of Russia and Pakistan, I reaffirmed Iran's commitment to peace in the region. The only way to end this war--ignited by the Zionist regime and US--is recognising Iran's legitimate rights, payment of reparations, and firm international guarantees against future aggression
—Masoud Pezeshkian, Iranian President
GUARANTEE
GUARANTEES AGAINST FUTURE AGGRESSION
RECOGNISE IRAN'S RIGHTS
PAY REPARATIONS
'LARGEST OIL SHOCK IN HISTORY'
The International Energy Agency said the world is facing the "largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market" as Iran attacks ships and oil prices remain high.
OIL & PORT THREATS
If our ports and docks are threatened, all ports and docks in the region will be our legitimate targets. The armed forces "will carry out a heavier operation than what we have done so far"
—Abolfazl Shekarchi, Iran armed forces spokesman
Strait of Hormuz
INDIA'S CRUDE OIL IMPORTS & NON-OIL EXPORTS
Allowed ships of some countries to cross Hormuz: Iran
Iran has allowed ships from 'some countries' to cross the Strait of Hormuz, Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi said on Thursday, as the waterway remained effectively closed during the war with the US and Israel.
"Some countries have already talked to us about passing the strait and we have cooperated with them," said Takht-Ravanchi during an interview with AFP in Tehran. "As far as Iran is concerned we feel that those countries that joined the aggression should not benefit from safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz."

'Only way to end this war...': Iran outlines 3 CONDITIONS

Tehran: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has laid out three terms for ending the ongoing conflict with the United States and Israel, including guarantees that the country will not face future attacks. In an X post on Wednesday, Pezeshkian said the war could end if the conditions are fulfilled. He conveyed the country's position during phone calls with the leaders of Russia and Pakistan. "Talking to leaders of Russia and Pakistan, I reaffirmed Iran's commitment to peace in the region," he wrote in the post. He said that terms to end the war included recognising Iran's legitimate rights and payment of reparations for damage caused by the war. "The only way to end this war — ignited by the Zionist regime & US — is recognising Iran's legitimate rights, payment of reparations, and firm int'l guarantees against future aggression," he said. Meanwhile, Tehran on Thursday stated vessels passing through Strait of Hormuz "needs our approval or else be targeted".

Retaliatory strikes on

Fresh attacks were reported from Kuwait, UAE and Saudi Arabia. Kuwait airport was hit by drone attacks on Thursday while debris from Iranian drones damaged the country's power lines. Saudi Arabia said it has been intercepting drones heading towards its oil fields. A drone attack caused minor fire at a residential building in Dubai.

When Hormuz choke hurt world, India gets a clear passage?

NEW DELHI

The geopolitical landscape of 2026 has been defined by a turbulent "War in the Gulf," a conflict that has pushed global energy markets to the edge.

On Thursday, a notable diplomatic breakthrough emerged: Iran reportedly granted safe passage for India-flagged tankers to traverse through the Strait of Hormuz, the most critical oil chokepoint with 20–25% of the world's total seaborne oil and 20–25% of liquefied natural gas (LNG) transit the waterway daily. This development comes at a time when the 21-mile-wide (33 km) chokepoint has become a "no-go zone" for Western-linked vessels. As the US-Israel-Iran conflict escalates, New Delhi's "strategic autonomy" is being put to its ultimate test.

While the world watches oil prices surge past $100 per barrel, India's back-channel diplomacy appears to have managed to secure a temporary reprieve for its energy lifelines.

Iran has reportedly assured safe passage for Indian-flagged oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz following diplomatic talks between India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi, offering major relief for India's energy security amid rising Middle East tensions.

As out of 5.7 million barrels of oil that the country consumes daily, it imports 5.2 million, much of it from the Persian Gulf exporters such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait. The move helps safeguard crucial crude oil supplies, as a giant portion of India's imports passes through the narrow maritime route controlled by Iran.

Officials say continued diplomatic engagement remains key to protecting trade routes and preventing further global oil market turmoil.

Safe navigation of tankers through the Hormuz was a key issue when External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar spoke with Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi late Tuesday. The call was their third conversation since the start of the Iran conflict.

2 INDIAN-FLAGGED TANKERS PASS THROUGH STRAIT OF HORMUZ

Indian-flagged tankers - Pushpak and Parimal - were able to transit the strait safely even as vessels linked to the US, Europe and Israel continue to face restrictions, as per sources.

Dark mode on, first India-bound ship reaches Mumbai

Mumabi: A crude oil tanker captained by an Indian slipped though the war-hit Strait of Hormuz after briefly going "dark" to avoid detection, becoming the first India-bound vessel to safely navigate the strategic waterway since the conflict erupted between the US, Israel and Iran late last month. The Liberia-flagged Shenlong Suezmax oil tanker, carrying Saudi crude and captained by an Indian, berthed at the Mumbai Port on Wednesday evening after crossing the volatile waterway where maritime traffic has largely stalled or being come under attack due to military activity.

18 ships attacked by Iran in past two weeks

The Iranian military closed the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz that handles over 20 million barrels of crude oil per day after the US-Israel launched a military campaign against Iran. At least 16 ships have been attacked by Iran over the past two weeks, with Tehran warning of further strikes on vessels operating in the region. A Thai-flagged vessel bound for Kandla port in India's Gujarat was struck in the Hormuz on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the Indian government has said that 28 Indian-flagged vessels are currently operating in the Persian Gulf region.

India's crude supplies secure, no shortage of fuel: Min

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri on Thursday said India's crude supply position remains secure despite the ongoing West Asia crisis and disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

Speaking in the Lok Sabha, Puri said the world has not faced a moment like the present in the history of the energy sector and noted that the Strait of Hormuz is effectively closed to commercial shipping for the first time in recorded history. He said India, despite having no role in causing the West Asia conflict, has to navigate through its consequences.

"The refineries are operating at high capacity utilisation. In several cases, they are exceeding 100%. There is no shortage of petrol, diesel, kerosene, ATF or fuel oil. The availability of petrol, diesel, aviation, turbine fuel, kerosene and fuel oil is fully assured..." he said.

Fear of tree cutting amid LPG crunch: Khandre issues stern warning

BENGALURU: Due to the gas shortage caused by the conflict situation in the Middle East, the demand for firewood has increased. In this context, Forest, Ecology, and Environment Minister Eshwar B Khandre has given clear instructions to take strict precautions to prevent illegal tree cutting in forests, forest fringes, and government lands.

In a written directive to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of the Forest Force, he stated that the impact of the gas shortage has also reached Karnataka. Since hotels, resorts, and homestays are facing problems due to the unavailability of commercial LPG cylinders, and there are also disruptions in domestic cooking gas supply, officials have been ordered to increase patrolling and surveillance to prevent illegal tree felling for firewood.

DG&IGP instructs all commissioners, SPs to inspect LPG godowns

BENGALURU

Director General and Inspector General of Police M A Saleem has ordered review of LPG cylinder stocks and directed all police commissioners and SPs to inspect warehouses in their jurisdictions. He has also instructed police to check stock levels, daily dispatches, and documents.

The police commissioners and SPs have been told to inspect warehouses, verify stock, and report findings, monitor agencies with existing stock to prevent black marketing, take action against those selling stock on the black market, to sure smooth supply from warehouses, gather documents on stock levels, orders and delivery timelines. The police will take strict action against those exploiting the situation. Inspections of godowns is already under way across Bengaluru and is expected to be conducted in other parts of the state over the next few days.

'RESPECT SOLDIERS': SC REFUSES PLEA AGAINST WAR MEMORIAL

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday declined to entertain a plea concerning a war memorial in Dehradun, by telling the petitioner to respect those who died in the line of duty.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi was hearing a plea challenging a January order of the Uttarakhand High Court.

The high court had dismissed the plea, which alleged that the land, over which the war memorial 'Sainya Dham' in Dehradun district was to be constructed, was forest land and as such should not be allowed for construction purposes.

Considering the challenge to the high court's order, the bench asked the counsel representing the petitioner, "You have a problem with the construction of a war memorial?"

"For those who have sacrificed their lives for the nation, at least have some respect. We will issue a show-cause notice to him. Let him come and explain, and we will hold an inquiry as to on whose instance he is filing this petition," the bench cautioned.

The petitioner's counsel appearing claimed that even the war memorial was not being properly constructed there.

The court opined, the petition should have been dismissed by the high court with exemplary costs.

BIRLA RETURNS TO THE CHAIR

Trust me! Not even PM above rules: Birla to Oppn

NEW DELHI

A day after the Lok Sabha rejected a motion seeking his removal, Speaker Om Birla on Thursday said the House would function strictly according to its rules and procedures, asserting that no member, including the Prime Minister, was above them.

Addressing the House after returning to the Chair, Birla said the functioning of Parliament is governed by rules framed by the House itself and that these apply equally to all members.

"The House has been running with rules and regulations and will continue to function in future, irrespective of whether it is acceptable to any member or not," Birla said. "I will continue to discharge my duty with all sincerity and impartiality."

Rejecting allegations that some members were being prevented from speaking, the Speaker said everyone is allowed to participate in debates but only in accordance with parliamentary procedures.

"I have always tried to ensure that every member expresses their views within the framework of rules and procedures," he said, adding that time was given to members to speak in the House.

Birla also stressed that no member enjoys any special privilege to bypass the rules of the House. "No member has the right to speak beyond the rules. Whether it is the Prime Minister, ministers, the Leader of the Opposition or any other member, everyone has to follow the rules," he said.

The Speaker said the procedures governing parliamentary business were framed by the House itself and must be respected by all members. "These rules have been made by the House and I have inherited them," he said.

Thanking members for expressing confidence in him after the motion against him was defeated, Birla said the Speaker's chair represents the dignity of the institution rather than any individual. "The Chair does not belong to any one individual; it is a symbol of the prestige of the House," he said.

QUICK READ

Waste from 5K homes powers City eatery amid LPG shortage

Bengaluru

Amid the ongoing West Asia Conflict and the resulting LPG shortage, an eatery in the city has found an alternative fuel source by using biogas generated from household waste. Nearly 5,000 homes in Koramangala supply organic waste to a biogas plant that now powers cooking at Empire Restaurant in 5th Block. While several eateries across Karnataka have reduced operations due to the gas cylinder crunch, the Koramangala outlet continues to function normally. The biogas facility is a joint initiative by Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited, Saahas and Carbon Masters.

Art Fest on March 15 in city

Bengaluru

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Janapadaru Cultural Forum, in collaboration with local Resident Welfare Associations, will organise an Art Fest on March 15 at Janapadaru Ranga Mandira, located at the Abhaya Anjaneya Temple premises in Nimbekayipura on Old Madras Road. The event will feature women artists presenting paintings, songs, dances and skits, along with lectures and exhibitions on health and nutrition by subject experts. More than 100 stalls will showcase handicrafts and food items prepared by women entrepreneurs.

Drivers queue up at CNG stations amid supply concerns

Bengaluru

Long queues of vehicles, especially taxis, were seen at several CNG stations across the city on Wednesday amid fears of a possible price hike or supply disruption. However, fuel distribution companies clarified that supplies remain normal and there has been no unusual surge in demand. Shashikumar, a taxi driver waiting to refill his vehicle, said drivers were worried that CNG prices might rise similar to auto LPG. He added that he faced no difficulty in filling his tank but hoped supplies would remain steady. Nithin, an employee at a station on Sir M. Visvesvaraya Road, said CNG supply and prices continue unchanged.

Revise guidance value to protect farmers: Min

Periodic land guidance value revision needed to ensure fair compensation, curb illegal transactions

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Batting for periodic revision of land guidance values, Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda said regular updates would help prevent illegal land transactions and ensure fair compensation for farmers whose lands are acquired for development projects.

Responding to a question raised by BJP MLC K. S. Naveen in the Karnataka Legislative Council, the minister said large gaps between official guidance values and prevailing market prices often resulted in irregularities and financial losses for landowners during acquisition.

Gowda pointed out that in several areas the disparity between the guidance value and the market price had widened significantly over the years, leading to unjust compensation for farmers. "Revising the guidance value periodically is the only solution to prevent injustice caused to farmers during land acquisition," he said.

Earlier, Naveen had questioned whether compensating farmers based on pre-2019 guidance values was causing losses to landowners. He asked the government if awarding compensation during acquisitions based on outdated values deprived farmers of the true market price of their land.

Explaining the existing framework under the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, Gowda said the law clearly outlines the procedure for determining compensation. According to the provisions, once a preliminary notification for land acquisition is issued, the guidance value for that land is not revised.

Instead, either the prevailing guidance value or the registered sale deed values from the past three years are taken into consideration. Authorities then calculate the average amount based on the highest transaction value to determine the compensation payable to landowners, the minister explained.

However, Gowda acknowledged that outdated guidance values often place farmers at a disadvantage. "The government acquires land every day for various projects. If guidance values are not revised from time to time, it can cause injustice to farmers," he said.

The minister added that he had recommended revising guidance values periodically, though such proposals often face opposition from certain quarters.

Highlighting the scale of the discrepancy, Gowda said that in some places the official guidance value of land may be around ₹2 lakh, while the actual market price ranges between ₹70 lakh and ₹80 lakh. Such differences, he noted, also encourage underreporting of transaction values and the use of unaccounted money in property deals.

"Considering all these factors, revising the guidance value regularly is essential not only to ensure justice to farmers but also to curb illegal transactions," he added.

BDA a promoter under RERA, must register projects: Tribunal

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Real Estate Appellate Tribunal has ruled that the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) falls within the definition of a promoter under the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act and must therefore comply with all provisions of the law, including registration of its projects.

The tribunal made the observation in its March 3 judgment while upholding an earlier order of the Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-RERA) directing registration of the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL). However, BDA officials indicated that the authority is likely to challenge the tribunal's order before the Karnataka High Court.

The case arose from a November 7, 2025 order issued by K-RERA following complaints filed by several allottees of the NPKL project. The regulatory authority had allowed the complaints and issued multiple directions to BDA regarding compliance with RERA provisions.

Challenging the order, BDA approached the appellate tribunal, arguing that it was a statutory planning authority and therefore outside the jurisdiction of the RERA framework. The tribunal rejected this preliminary objection, holding that the NPKL project qualifies as an ongoing real estate project that requires registration under the state's RERA rules.

The tribunal bench, comprising judicial member Santosh Kumar Shetty and administrative member Mahendra Jain, referred to the provisions of the RERA Act and noted that the definition of "promoter" is broad and inclusive. According to the order, the definition explicitly includes development authorities and public bodies that develop land into layouts or construct buildings on land owned by them or placed at their disposal by the government for sale to the public.

The tribunal concluded that BDA, when developing layouts and selling plots, clearly falls within the scope of a promoter under the Act. It observed that the objective of the legislation is to bring both public and private developers under a common regulatory framework to improve transparency and accountability in the real estate sector.

The bench also noted that BDA executes lease-cum-sale agreements with allottees, similar to agreements entered into by private developers, thereby binding both parties to timelines and possession conditions mentioned in those agreements. Consequently, the tribunal dismissed BDA's appeal at the admission stage and confirmed the K-RERA order directing the authority to comply with the Act's provisions relating to project registration, promoter obligations and the rights of allottees.

Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout project

The Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout project, originally scheduled for completion by December 31, 2021, has left over 10,000 families waiting for possession of their plots. Spread across about 4,043 acres in nine blocks between Mysuru Road and Magadi Road in Bengaluru, the project has witnessed uneven progress. As of June 2025, nearly 93% of road and drainage works were completed, while only 46% of soil stabilisation work had been finished. In March 2025, the project was marked as "lapsed" by K-RERA.

LPG shortage hits B'luru PGs, tenants seek work-from-home option

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A shortage of commercial LPG cylinders has begun affecting paying guest (PG) accommodations across Bengaluru's eastern IT corridor, prompting many tenants to request work-from-home arrangements as uncertainty over food availability grows.

PG operators in areas such as Whitefield, Marathahalli and Ashwath Nagar—which house large numbers of migrant professionals working in nearby tech parks—say they are struggling to obtain cooking gas and may be forced to cut down meal services.

The Whitefield PG Owners' Welfare Association has already issued a notice to residents stating that lunch services will be suspended for a few days starting March 13 due to the shortage of LPG cylinders.

A PG owner in Marathahalli, who is part of the association, confirmed that the situation is becoming increasingly difficult to manage. "As of now, we have gas stock only for the next two days. If the situation continues, we may have to ask some tenants to return to their hometowns because managing food will become extremely difficult," the owner said.

Tenants say the uncertainty is affecting their daily routines. Sai Kiran, a resident of a PG in Ashwath Nagar, said residents had already been informed about possible disruptions in meal services.

"Even in our office, they are taking note of employees who stay in PGs so that they can be given work-from-home options if the situation worsens," he said.

Several PG operators claim they are finding it difficult to contact LPG distributors or secure fresh cylinders. One owner said their gas dealer had not responded to calls for two days. "We have only one cylinder left now and are trying to manage by serving simple items such as rice, upma and vermicelli so that fuel consumption remains low," the owner said.

With thousands of migrant professionals dependent on PG facilities for food and accommodation, operators fear prolonged shortages could disrupt daily life for many working residents in the city's IT hub.

Night-time waste collection planned in South Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) is set to introduce night-time garbage collection in parts of South Bengaluru in an effort to tackle overflowing waste and roadside dumping.

The initiative will initially be implemented in select wards under the Bengaluru South City Corporation limits, with plans for a wider rollout if the pilot project proves successful. Officials said the move is aimed at ensuring cleaner streets and reducing waste accumulation during the day.

BSWML Chief Executive Officer Kari Gowda said residents have long complained about garbage piling up due to delayed or missed morning pick-ups. As a result, black spots have become common along several arterial and residential roads in the city.

Officials said the night-time collection model will complement the existing morning waste collection schedule and help prevent garbage from accumulating in public spaces. It is also expected to improve neighbourhood hygiene and enhance the overall appearance of localities.

Another advantage of night collection is that it can reduce traffic disruptions caused by garbage trucks during peak morning hours, particularly in busy commercial areas and narrow residential streets. However, civic authorities clarified that the new system does not mean residents can dispose of waste at any time of the day.

Eight years on, Jalahalli Cross underpass still stuck in limbo

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The long-pending underpass project at Jalahalli Cross, a crucial junction for commuters entering the city via Tumakuru Road, continues to face delays nearly eight years after it was first proposed, leaving residents and motorists frustrated.

The underpass project, aimed at easing traffic congestion at the busy intersection, was approved by the state government during 2017–18 under the Chief Minister Nagarotthana Scheme and was initially assigned to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). To facilitate construction, authorities identified 48 properties for acquisition. However, the acquisition of 26 properties is still pending, which has significantly delayed the start of the project. Following the formation of the Greater Bengaluru Authority and the creation of five new city corporations, the project has now been handed over to the Bengaluru West City Corporation for execution.

Account control key to cheque bounce liability: HC

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that liability for cheque bounce offences arises only if the accused had control over the bank account at the time the cheque was presented for realisation.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna made the observation while quashing criminal proceedings initiated against ND Developers Private Limited, its managing director M. K. K. Durani and several other directors in a cheque dishonour case.

The complaint was filed by Ritesh Raushan, who had purchased a flat from the company along with his wife. According to the complaint, the developer had failed to hand over possession of the apartment within the stipulated time and was contractually obligated to pay ₹41,75,634 as interest on the home loan taken by the purchasers.

As part of the settlement, the company issued a cheque for ₹41 lakh to the complainant. However, before the cheque could be presented, a police notice was issued to the manager of Bank of Maharashtra directing a debit freeze on the accounts of the company and its managing director in connection with a separate cheating and misappropriation complaint.

The freeze on the accounts came into effect on May 24, 2024. Subsequently, on June 6, 2024, the complainant presented the cheque dated March 9, 2024 for realisation. The cheque was dishonoured with the endorsement "account blocked", citing reasons covered under codes 21 and 25 of Reserve Bank of India guidelines. Following the dishonour, the complainant initiated proceedings under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, which deals with cheque bounce offences.

Challenging the case, the petitioners argued that they had no knowledge of the account freeze when the cheque was presented and that the dishonour occurred due to the debit freeze order rather than insufficient funds. After examining the material on record, Justice Nagaprasanna noted that the company's accounts had remained active for nearly two months after the cheque was issued and had sufficient balance during that period. The court also found that the petitioners were not aware of the account freeze at the time the cheque was presented.

Referring to RBI guidelines, the judge explained that code 21 refers to payments stopped due to attachment orders, while code 25 relates to withdrawal restrictions in insolvency situations. "In such circumstances, the drawer of the cheque has no control or authority over the account," the court observed, holding that criminal liability cannot arise where the account holder lacks control over the account at the time of presentation.

BOOST FOR TOURISM

Karnataka to train drivers in soft skills to improve tourist experience

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Taking the adage "first impression is the best impression" seriously, the Karnataka Tourism Department has decided to train auto-rickshaw and taxi drivers in soft skills to improve the experience of inbound tourists visiting the state.

The initiative was announced in the recent Budget speech by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, although the department has been working on the proposal for the past few months.

The move follows repeated complaints from tourists, particularly foreign visitors, about being overcharged or harassed by drivers in cities such as Bengaluru. Officials say drivers are often the first people tourists interact with upon arrival, making their behaviour crucial in shaping visitors' perceptions of the destination.

"The objective of this programme is to improve the first impression tourists carry about a destination and about our state in general. We want to enhance the overall visitor experience," said K. V. Thrilok Chandra, Secretary of the Tourism Department.

Under the programme, drivers, tourist guides, porters and even police personnel will receive training in basic soft skills such as greeting tourists, polite communication and professional conduct. The state government has earmarked ₹1 crore for implementing the initiative. Training sessions will be conducted district-wise in phases and customised to suit the requirements of each tourist destination. According to officials, while the core soft skills will remain common across districts, the training modules will be adapted based on the expectations and characteristics of specific locations.

"For drivers and porters, we will tie up with local associations in different districts and design appropriate modules. Though the fundamental skills will be the same, the training will be slightly customised depending on the destination," Thrilok Chandra said.

The Tourism Department is also planning to collaborate with the Karnataka Police to train police personnel who often interact with tourists. Officials said the department would first identify the challenges faced by the police while assisting tourists and then design training solutions accordingly.

Stakeholders in the tourism sector have welcomed the initiative, saying such a programme was long overdue.

Patrick George, president of the Karnataka Tourism Forum, said tourists often face issues with overcharging by auto drivers. "Even today, some drivers charge ₹200 to ₹300 for rides that should cost ₹60 or ₹70 from Majestic in Bengaluru," he said.

He added that simple measures such as courteous behaviour, neat appearance and professional conduct by drivers and guides can significantly enhance visitors' impressions of the state.

QUICK READ

Gas shortage forces sweet shops to shift to firewood stoves

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The ongoing commercial LPG shortage in Bengaluru has begun affecting sweet manufacturing units across the city, forcing many businesses to switch to traditional firewood stoves to continue production. Earlier limited largely to hotels and eateries, the gas crisis has now spread to sweet shops struggling to procure commercial cylinders. With supplies uncertain, several owners have resorted to firewood-based cooking to keep operations running and meet customer demand. At Sri Manjunatha Wholesale Sweet Shop, large stacks of firewood have been arranged to manage pending orders.

Airspace curbs disrupt flights at Bengaluru airport

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Flight operations at Kempegowda International Airport continued to face disruption after airspace restrictions affected services to several West Asian destinations. Data released by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) showed that 21 flights were cancelled due to the curbs, highlighting the ongoing impact on international travel from Bengaluru. According to airport authorities, 11 incoming and 10 outgoing flights were cancelled during the day as airlines adjusted schedules following the restrictions. The affected sectors included Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Dubai and Doha, causing inconvenience to passengers travelling for work, family visits and international connections.

Gas shortage halts lunch, self-cooking in Whitefield PGs

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Residents of Paying Guest (PG) accommodations in Whitefield are facing disruptions after the Whitefield PG Owners Welfare Association announced a temporary suspension of lunch and self-cooking services from March 13 due to a severe shortage of commercial gas cylinders. In a notice issued on March 10, the association informed residents that the unavailability of cooking gas has made it difficult for facility managers to continue full meal services. As a result, lunch services will remain suspended for a few days. The association also said self-cooking facilities, widely used by residents to prepare their own meals, will not be available during this period.

'Road works, expressways worsening elephant menace'

Rising elephant population and road disruptions are intensifying human–wildlife conflict

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Forest Minister Eshwar B. Khandre said the elephant menace in several parts of Karnataka has increased due to the destruction and diversion of forest roads during major infrastructure works, including expressway projects.

Replying to a question raised by MLA P. M. Narendra Swamy during the Question Hour, the minister said the government has taken multiple steps to reduce human–elephant conflict and protect both wildlife and local residents.

Khandre noted that the rising population of elephants, coupled with disruptions to traditional forest routes, has contributed to frequent movement of animals into human settlements. He said infrastructure works such as expressways and other basic development activities have altered natural corridors, pushing elephants towards nearby villages and agricultural lands.

To address the issue, the government has sanctioned construction of 116 km of railway barricades at an estimated cost of ₹201 crore. Work on these barriers is currently underway at different stages across the state, he informed.

For the Malavalli Assembly constituency alone, about 5.5 km of railway track barriers have been approved at a cost of ₹9.38 crore, and construction work is expected to begin soon. In addition to barricades, the forest department is also implementing other preventive measures such as solar-powered tentacle fencing and trenches to deter elephants from entering human habitations.

The minister said special task forces have been created to respond quickly when wild animals stray into populated areas. An elephant task force has been formed to drive elephants back into forest areas, while a separate leopard task force has been established to deal with leopard sightings and related incidents.

"We are also monitoring the movement of wildlife using drone cameras. If there is a demand for more railway track barriers, sincere efforts will be made to provide them," Khandre said.

He added that the government is also considering the appointment of sub-zonal forest officers to strengthen field-level monitoring and response.

Earlier, Narendra Swamy highlighted growing concerns in Malavalli and Kanakapura regions, where elephants frequently stray from the Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary into nearby villages.

He urged the government to allocate additional funds and implement stronger protective measures to prevent elephants and other wild animals from entering human settlements.

Police warn against hoarding LPG cylinders amid supply concerns

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Amid concerns over disruption in gas supply due to the ongoing tensions linked to the Iran–Israel conflict, Karnataka police have launched a crackdown on those illegally stocking commercial LPG cylinders and creating artificial scarcity in the market.

M. A. Saleem, Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG-IGP), has issued clear directions to all district superintendents of police across the state to closely monitor the supply and distribution of LPG cylinders and prevent black-marketing.

Following the directive, police teams in Bengaluru have begun inspecting LPG warehouses and distribution points. Personnel from the Hoysala Patrol units are visiting storage facilities across the city to verify stocks and ensure proper distribution of cylinders.

Officials said Police Sub-Inspector (PSI) level officers have been instructed to personally inspect warehouses and prepare detailed reports on the number of cylinders in stock, incoming orders and distribution patterns. Police are also monitoring the supply chain from warehouses to end consumers to ensure that cylinders are not diverted for illegal sale. Authorities warned that strict action will be taken against dealers found selling cylinders at prices higher than the government-approved rate or deliberately creating shortages.

AI AGE REQUIRES STRONG HUMAN SKILLS: VDR RADHAKRISHNAN NAIR

BENGALURU

Strengthening human values and life skills is essential in the age of artificial intelligence to ensure that technology does not replace human thinking, said A. Radhakrishnan Nair, founder and president of the Indian Association of Life Skills Education (IALSE), New Delhi.

He was speaking at the International Conference on Life Skills Education organised by the Centre for Life Skills Education at Kristu Jayanti College (Deemed to be University) on Thursday.

Delivering a talk on the theme "The Human Touch in the Age of AI: Cultivating Essential Life Skills," Nair emphasised that life skills help individuals understand themselves, recognise their strengths and weaknesses, and overcome challenges in life. He described life skills as psychosocial abilities that enable people to adapt to changing social conditions while maintaining emotional balance and ethical values.

Tracing the origins of life skills education, Nair noted that the concept emerged in the United States in 1965 as a response to rising concerns such as adolescent violence, suicide and drug addiction. Over time, international organisations developed frameworks to promote life skills education, recognising its importance in building resilient individuals capable of navigating complex social and technological environments. Nair also highlighted the broader purpose of education, stressing the need to cultivate cultural competence among students in an increasingly globalised world.

Earlier, Jais V. Thomas, Chief Finance Officer of Kristu Jayanti (Deemed to be University), delivered the presidential address and spoke about the growing influence of digital technology on human interaction. He pointed to the problem of excessive screen time, noting that spending several hours a day on mobile devices over a lifetime could amount to years spent in front of screens, limiting opportunities for meaningful personal engagement.

Conference convenor G. Prathap briefed participants about the event schedule and described life skills as essential for unlocking India's potential. He said more than 30 research manuscripts on topics such as emotional intelligence and problem-solving had been submitted for consideration in a Scopus-indexed Springer Nature journal.

The conference concluded with the message that life skills act as a form of "social immunisation," helping individuals develop resilience, self-awareness and critical thinking needed in an AI-driven world.

Coconut Fiber Sector Holds Vast Potential, Says K.V. Prabhakar

BENGALURU

Media Adviser to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, K.V. Prabhakar, highlighted the growing opportunities in the coconut fiber sector while participating in an exhibition organized by the Karnataka State Coir Development Corporation Limited.

Speaking on the occasion, Prabhakar said he was pleased to witness the wide range of innovative products made from coconut fiber and emphasized their environmental benefits.

"The exhibition showcased the immense potential and opportunities in the coconut fiber sector. The versatile qualities of coconut fiber and the variety of products produced from it are environmentally friendly and hold great promise for sustainable development," Prabhakar said. He noted that the event provided valuable insight into how coconut-based products can contribute to eco-friendly industries and create new avenues for farmers and entrepreneurs. Minister Sharan Basappa Darshanapur, youth leader B.R. Naidu, President of Balabhavan, departmental officials, and Lakshminarayan, Media Adviser to Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed, were present during the visit. Prabhakar also extended his best wishes to the Chairman of the corporation, Janakiram Nataraj, expressing hope that the organization would further strengthen its initiatives under his leadership.

"I conveyed my best wishes to Chairman Janakiram Nataraj and expressed hope that by further developing the corporation, farmers' coconut products will reach international markets. I am confident that the corporation will achieve significant progress during his tenure," Prabhakar added.

Siddaramaiah seeks full attendance in Houses; MLAs press for more funds

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has directed ministers and legislators to ensure mandatory attendance in both Houses during the ongoing budget session of the Karnataka Legislature.

The Chief Minister issued the instruction during a Congress Legislature Party meeting held at a private hotel in the city. Stressing the importance of active participation, he said ministers as well as members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council must be present during proceedings and should not remain absent from the House.

Siddaramaiah said the state budget had been prepared carefully and allocations to various departments had been increased compared to the previous year. He added that the state's financial system remained stable despite not receiving the expected level of assistance from the Government of India. During the meeting, Siddaramaiah, who recently presented his record 17th state budget, and Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar, who completed six years as president of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC), were felicitated by party legislators.

Meanwhile, several Congress MLAs demanded higher development funds for their constituencies. Legislators urged the Chief Minister to sanction a grant of ₹100 crore for each constituency, arguing that there had been limited funding available for development works in the past two years.

MLAs pointed out that the latest budget did not provide additional allocations for constituency development, making it difficult to undertake infrastructure and welfare projects at the local level.

According to sources, the Chief Minister assured party legislators that their concerns would be addressed. He is said to have promised that ₹50 crore would be released by June for constituency development works, while the remaining ₹50 crore would be provided later in the year.

During the meeting, some legislators also expressed concern that allocations for certain corporations under the backward classes department had been reduced compared to the previous year.

Karnataka IT exports to cross ₹5.5 lakh crore this year: Kharge

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka's information technology exports are expected to exceed ₹5.5 lakh crore in the current financial year, IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge informed the Assembly on Thursday.

Replying to a question from BJP MLA Vedavyas Kamath, the minister said the state's IT exports have shown consistent growth over the past few years, with cumulative services exports crossing ₹12 lakh crore during the last three financial years starting 2022–23.

He said Karnataka recorded IT-BT exports worth ₹3.5 lakh crore in 2022–23, which rose to ₹4 lakh crore in 2023–24. The figure further increased to ₹4.5 lakh crore during 2024–25. "I am 100 per cent confident that we will cross ₹5.5 lakh crore by the end of the current financial year on March 31," Kharge said.

While Bengaluru continues to account for the lion's share of the state's IT exports, the minister said other cities are gradually contributing to the sector's growth as part of the government's effort to promote development beyond the capital. According to him, Mysuru contributes around ₹3,000 crore to the IT exports, while Mangaluru and the coastal region together account for nearly ₹3,500 crore. The cities of Belagavi and Hubballi contribute between ₹2,000 crore and ₹2,500 crore.

Responding to demands from BJP members for setting up IT parks in the coastal region, Kharge said the government is already working towards creating a favourable ecosystem for investments.

Medical student killed after tipper runs over her

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 21-year-old medical student died after a tipper lorry collided with a scooter and ran over her near Rajarajeshwari Medical College on Mysore Road.

The deceased, Kritika, was a fourth-year medical student at the same college. Another student, Hansa, who was riding the scooter, sustained injuries and is currently undergoing treatment at the college hospital.

According to police, the two students were travelling towards Mysore Road from the exit gate of the medical college when a tipper lorry heading towards Mysuru collided with their scooter. Due to the impact, Hansa fell to the left side of the road while Kritika, who was riding pillion, fell to the right side.

In the accident, the wheel of the tipper lorry ran over Kritika, leading to her death on the spot. Personnel from the Kengeri Traffic Police rushed to the scene and conducted an inspection. Hansa, who suffered serious injuries, was shifted to Rajarajeshwari Medical College Hospital for treatment.

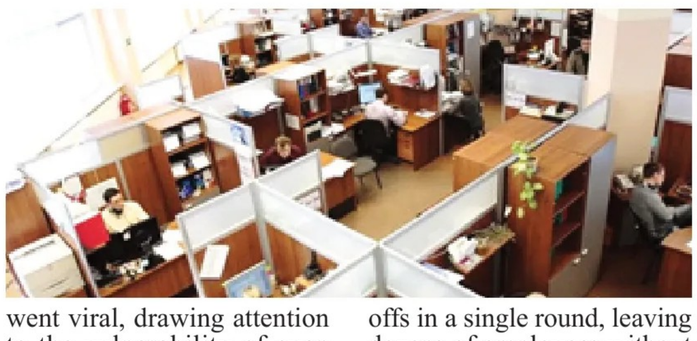
JOB INSECURITY

Bengaluru start-up sacks 40% staff in a day

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A Bengaluru-based IT start-up has allegedly laid off nearly 40 per cent of its workforce in a single day, sparking widespread debate online about job security in India's technology and start-up sector.

The episode came to light after chartered accountant Arpit Goyal shared details on the social media platform X, claiming that one of his friends was among those abruptly terminated despite earning an annual salary of ₹92 lakh. The post quickly went viral, drawing attention to the vulnerability of even highly paid professionals during sudden restructuring or cost-cutting measures.



According to the post, the company carried out the layoffs in a single round, leaving dozens of employees without jobs overnight. The move has triggered conversations about transparency in start-up work cultures, where employees often work long hours under intense performance expectations but may receive little warning about financial pressures or organisational restructuring. Several social media users expressed concern over the personal circumstances of some employees affected by the layoffs. Goyal wrote that one of the workers who lost his job was expecting his first child within a week, while another employee who was pregnant and preparing to apply for maternity leave was also among those terminated.

The incident has prompted strong reactions online, with many users criticising the way the layoffs were handled. Others used the opportunity to discuss financial planning and job security in high-paying sectors.

Some commenters argued that extremely high salary structures in certain start-ups can sometimes lead to sharp workforce reductions when companies attempt to control costs. Others stressed the need for professionals, even those earning close to a crore annually, to maintain emergency savings and avoid excessive lifestyle spending.

QUICK READ

Artists wanted for nine-hour drama

KOPPAL

The Karnataka Kannada and Culture Department is inviting applications from talented young men and women, as well as experienced stage artists and singers, for a nine-hour drama, Vachana Kalyana. Applicants aged 18–40 with theatre training and acting experience will be preferred. Selected artists must commit full-time for three months, with monthly honorarium, food, and accommodation provided. Forms are available on kannadasiri.karnataka.gov.in and must reach the Sant Kavi Kanakadasa and Tatvapadakara Study Centre in Bangalore by March 20. For further details, contact Assistant Director Karnakumara at 94485 38620.

Teachers honored for special SSLC classes effort

KOPPAL

Resource teachers who conducted special online classes for SSLC students under the "Spurthiya Nade" program were felicitated at the District Collector's office. Launched in December 2025 by Deputy Commissioner Dr. Suresh B. Itna, the program ran for three months, with Math, Science, and English teachers providing lessons from Monday to Saturday, 6–8 pm. Basavaraj, NIC head, and participating teachers were praised for their dedication. Officials present included Deputy Director Somashekar Gowda Patil, Ajjappa Sogalada, Nagamani Hosamani, Ajmira Ali, and Shivashankar Karadkal, among others. The program concluded successfully with wide appreciation from all departments.

JSS launches corticosteroid safety initiative program

MYSURU

JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research (JSS AHER) has launched an important program to ensure the safe and rational use of corticosteroids in patients with rheumatological conditions. The initiative was unveiled during the Academic Council meeting at JSS Medical College, with the release of the "CorticoCare Card" and the "Steroid Prescribing Guidelines for the Department of Rheumatology – 2026." This program will be implemented in the Department of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology at JSS Hospital, Mysuru, and forms part of a Ph.D. research project by Dr. Mohammed Daiyaan Khan from the Department of Clinical Pharmacy. A special Rheumatology Corticosteroid Stewardship Committee (RCSC) has been created to support safe and evidence-based use of steroids.

MP seeks urban economic zone status for Mysuru

The MP emphasized that Mysuru's tourism, heritage, and environment require careful planning to preserve its culture and natural beauty

MYSURU

Mysuru Member of Parliament Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar has urged the Central government to include Mysuru in the proposed Urban Economic Zone scheme to speed up the city's development.

The MP submitted a memorandum to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during a meeting in New Delhi. He requested that Mysuru be considered under the scheme announced in the recent Union Budget.

According to him, the scheme aims to improve modern infrastructure in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities with a population of more than five lakh and in major pilgrimage centres. He said Mysuru, widely known as the cultural capital of Karnataka, has a rich heritage and global recognition. Including the city in the scheme would further strengthen its development and attract new opportunities.

The MP explained that Mysuru already has strong tourism, heritage, and environmental value. Therefore, any future development projects should be planned carefully so that the city's culture and natural beauty are protected.

He said that once Mysuru is included in the scheme, experts, public representatives, and citizens will be consulted to prepare a comprehensive development plan. Suggestions from different sectors will be collected to design projects that benefit the people and support sustainable growth.Mr. Wadiyar also noted that the Finance Minister assured him that appropriate action would be taken after reviewing the request.The Urban Economic Zone scheme has been designed by the Central government to promote rapid urban development. Cities like Bengaluru, Surat, Varanasi, Visakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Puri, Cuttack, Coimbatore, Erode and Tiruppur are already part of the initiative.Each zone is expected to receive nearly ₹5,000 crore every year for infrastructure development through a Public-Private Partnership model.

MP Prabha Mallikarjun raises LPG crisis issue

MPs protested the LPG crisis, criticizing government claims on energy self-reliance. Prabha Mallikarjun highlighted long queues and household struggles due to cylinder shortages

DAVANAGERE

Prabha Mallikarjun, Member of Parliament from Davanagere, has urged the central government to take immediate steps to address the ongoing LPG shortage affecting people across the country.

The MP joined a protest held at the Parliament House New Delhi on Thursday along with Opposition Leader Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, General Secretary of the Indian National Congress. The protest was organized to demand quick action from the central government so that citizens can get relief from the shortage of cooking gas.

During the demonstration, MPs raised slogans and held placards highlighting the LPG crisis. Some placards criticized the government's earlier claims about reducing dependence on foreign sources of energy and questioned the current shortage faced by consumers.

Prabha Mallikarjun said the shortage of LPG cylinders has created serious difficulties for ordinary families. She said many people are standing in long queues to get cooking gas cylinders, while several households are struggling to manage their daily cooking needs.

She also alleged that the situation has worsened during the tenure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and that people across the country are facing problems due to the lack of timely supply.

According to the MP, citizens are expecting immediate solutions rather than explanations. She urged the government to take urgent measures to ensure adequate supply of LPG cylinders and reduce the burden on common people.

Several MPs from the INDIA Alliance also participated in the protest and demanded quick action from the central government to resolve the LPG crisis and provide relief to households across the country.

Prasannakumar questioned the government's decision to shift students to Hosamane, raising concerns about poor children's school access

JDS leader slams Minister over district funds

SHIVAMOGGA

Former MLA K. B. Prasannakumar has strongly criticised School Education and District In-charge Minister S. Madhu Bangarappa, accusing him of failing to bring development funds to Shivamogga district.

Speaking at a press conference, Prasannakumar said the minister had repeatedly claimed that he had discussed several development proposals for the district with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. However, he alleged that even after three State budgets presented by the government, no significant funds had been allocated for the district's development. He also raised concern over the condition of government schools in the district. According to him, although the government announced the recruitment of 15,000 teachers in the budget, several schools in Shivamogga have been closed recently. He said around 19 government schools in the district were shut down, including a government school on Kamakshi Street in the city that had been functioning since 1964.Prasannakumar claimed that the students from that school were shifted to another government school in Hosamane. He questioned the government's decision and asked whether the authorities had decided that children from poor families should not have access to nearby schools.

He also criticised the government for announcing teacher recruitment on one side while closing schools on the other. Such actions, he said, create confusion and affect the education system.Apart from education issues, the former MLA expressed concern over the alleged spread of ganja in the district. He urged Superintendent of Police B. Nikhil to form a special police team to control the problem and ensure strict action against illegal activities.

Absconding robbery accused caught, faces multiple sentences

SULLIA

Sharath S. (24) of Belthangady Neria, who had been absconding from a house robbery case, was arrested by Bellare police. He was sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment with Rs. 500 fine under Section 457 IPC, and 10 months' imprisonment with Rs. 500 fine under Section 380 IPC; failure to pay fines adds 10 days each. A separate case under Section 269 IPC was also registered for skipping court, with Rs. 1,000 fine or 10 days' imprisonment.

Minor Assault Case: Accused gets 20-year jail

SHIVAMOGGA:

A court in Shivamogga has sentenced a 23-year-old man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh for sexually assaulting a minor girl after promising to marry her. The victim was 16 years old at the time of the incident.

According to officials, the case was registered at Shiralakoppa Police Station in Shikaripura taluk under provisions of the POCSO Act and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The investigation was conducted by then Deputy Superintendent of Police Keshav K.V., who later submitted the charge sheet against the accused in court.The case was heard by the Additional District and Sessions Court (FTSC-1) in Shivamogga. After examining the evidence and witness statements, Judge Ninganagouda B. Patil found the accused guilty and delivered the verdict, sentencing him to 20 years in prison along with the financial penalty.The court also directed the government to provide compensation of Rs 4 lakh to the victim's family. Special Public Prosecutor Sridhar argued the case on behalf of the state during the trial.The verdict highlights the judiciary's strict stance against crimes involving minors and reinforces the importance of protecting children from exploitation and abuse. Authorities have urged the public to report such crimes immediately so that strict legal action can be taken against offenders.

Woman arrested for keeping tribal man as slave

KUNDAPUR

Police in Kundapur have arrested a woman on charges of allegedly keeping a man from the Koraga Scheduled Tribe community as a slave for nearly 30 years and subjecting him to severe exploitation. The accused has been identified as Rajani Shetty of Kanyana village in Udupi district, while the victim is a 65-year-old man named Naga.

According to police, Naga was originally hired about three decades ago by Subbanna Shetty of Kabbailu near Hemmadi as a domestic worker. After Subbanna Shetty's death, his daughter Rajani Shetty and her husband Karunakar Shetty allegedly continued to force Naga to work without proper wages or basic facilities.

Investigators said the victim was made to carry out several tasks including herding cattle, cleaning cowsheds, removing dung, working in fields, gardening, and cleaning household toilets. Authorities also found that Naga was allegedly forced to sleep in a cowshed and was not allowed to leave the house freely.

Based on the complaint, a case was registered at Kundapur Rural Police Station under Section 3(1)(H) of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 2015. Kundapur Sub-Division Deputy Superintendent of Police H.D. Kulkarni led the investigation and arrested Rajani Shetty, who has been produced before a court and remanded to judicial custody.

Officials from the Social Welfare Department, Labour Department, and local administration inspected the site. Udupi District Superintendent of Police Hariram Shankar said rehabilitation measures are being arranged for the victim.

Mega trade fair to boost local artisans

CHIKKAMAGALURU

A three-day mega trade fair and exhibition aimed at supporting traditional artisans and small entrepreneurs will be held from March 13 to 15 at Azad Park in Chikkamagaluru. The event is being organized by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in association with the Department of Industries and Commerce.Assistant Director of the MSME Development Centre, Nagaraj, said the main objective of the fair is to encourage local artisans and provide them with better opportunities for growth. Around 18 different traditional trades, including carpentry, pottery, and sculpture, will be given priority during the program.

Gas Supply Crunch Pushes Kukke Temple to Use Firewood

SUBRAHMANYA

The management of Kukke Sri Subrahmanya Temple in Dakshina Kannada has assured devotees that there will be no disruption in the distribution of breakfast and food prasad despite concerns over gas shortages. Temple authorities said sufficient LPG stock has already been arranged for a week, and additional cylinders were delivered.Officials clarified that breakfast and food prasad will continue to be served as usual. However, to conserve gas due to possible supply disruptions linked to the ongoing Middle East conflict, the temple has slightly adjusted its breakfast menu. Instead of serving multiple varieties every day, avalakki with curd will be distributed once every two days, while on other days' simple offerings like soaked gram with salt and pepper will be served.Temple authorities also confirmed that the regular distribution of food prasad remains unchanged. The extra palya earlier served will be replaced with the temple's traditional chutney, ensuring devotees still receive meals according to schedule.As a precaution, the temple has stocked two truckloads of firewood to prepare food if gas supplies are interrupted in the coming weeks. Arrangements have been made to cook using traditional wood stoves if required.

VIDYANAGAR HOSTEL INSPECTION

Leaders ensure gas supply for student hostels

SHIVAMOGGA

Local leaders visited several student hostels in Shivamogga city and issued instructions to ensure a regular supply of cooking gas following concerns about a possible shortage. The visit was carried out after reports that gas availability across the country could be affected due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

During the visit, officials inspected the Sahyadri Students' Hostel and Sahyadri Women's Hostel located in the premises of Sahyadri College at Vidyanagar. They also visited the Sports Hostel for students in Ragigudda, Kuvempu Nagar, to review the situation.

Sources said around 150 to 250 students are staying in these hostels, and cooking gas is required every day to prepare three meals for them. The visiting team spoke with wardens and staff members to understand the current availability of cylinders and possible challenges in the coming days.

A request letter has been sent to the District Collector seeking uninterrupted supply of cylinders to the hostels. The team also contacted the concerned gas agency over the phone and urged them to take immediate precautionary steps to avoid any disruption in supply.

Leaders stressed that students should not face any difficulty in getting their daily meals and asked authorities to make advance arrangements if required.

W Congress leader H.C. Yogesh, M.S. Shivakumar, Vishwanath Kashi and other local leaders were present during the inspection.

Students warned about drug abuse and risks

SAKLESHPUR

An awareness programme on the dangers of drug abuse and the importance of legal awareness was held at the Government Higher Primary School in Devaladakere village of Sakleshpur taluk. The programme aimed to guide students towards a healthy lifestyle and help them stay away from harmful habits.

The event was organised to educate students about the serious risks associated with drugs and other addictions. Social activist Avarekadu Prithvi addressed the gathering and advised students to focus on education and personal growth.

He said that many young people today are being distracted by unhealthy influences such as addiction, emotional pressure and harmful social habits. According to him, the period from high school to college is very important in shaping a student's future. He urged students to treat educational institutions as sacred centres of learning and to stay committed to their studies.

QUICK READ

Chikkaballapura invites applications for legal adviser

CHIKKABALLAPURA

The Chikkaballapura District Collector has invited applications for the temporary post of Legal Adviser in the Revenue Department. The role involves advising on court cases, litigation, and appeals, ensuring proper guidance to Collectors. Eligible candidates include graduates in law (LLB), retired civil judges, special collectors, tahsildars, or sub-registrars with government service experience. Interested applicants must submit detailed biodata, experience, and a photograph in sealed envelopes to the Collector's office by April 2, 5:30 pm. Handwritten applications are accepted within one hour.

PM Kisan 22nd tranche to be released

CHIKKABALLAPUR

The 22nd tranche of PM Kisan funds will be released today (March 13) at 5 pm by the Hon'ble Prime Minister and ministers for farmers across Chikkaballapur district. A total of ₹17.35 crore will benefit 86,796 farmers. The program will be broadcast live at the offices of Taluk Assistant Directors of Agriculture. Farmers are requested to attend the live viewing in their respective taluks. The Joint Agriculture Department has urged officials and agricultural assistants to ensure smooth coordination and participation, helping farmers receive timely benefits under the PM Kisan scheme, said the Director of Agriculture.

Over 500 students appear for second PUC

CHITRADURGA

A total of 527 students appeared for the Hindi subject of the Second PUC annual exam held across 26 centers in the district on Thursday. Out of 536 registered students, nine were absent. The exam was conducted smoothly, with no reports of cheating or debarment at any center. Deputy Director Thimmaiah K. of the Department of Graduate Education said the examination concluded peacefully and successfully. Authorities ensured proper arrangements and supervision throughout the day. Students and staff appreciated the organized conduct, marking the Hindi exam as a smooth and fair evaluation for all participants.

Government releases Rs 120 crore grant for lakes project

The MLA stressed using 15th Plan funds for drinking water, with 63 Ganga Kalyan borewells sanctioned, six soon inaugurated

RAMANAGARA

The government has released a grant of Rs 120 crore for a project to fill lakes in the Kailancha hobli area, MLA H.A. Iqbal Hussain said. The project will be launched soon by Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar.

Speaking after inaugurating a clean drinking water unit in Kumbapur village, Iqbal Hussain said summer has begun, increasing demand for drinking water for people and livestock. Officials have been instructed to prevent shortages. Water supply in Mottedoddy, which had been pending for years, was launched today. Borewell water has dried in many rural areas, and the District Collector has promised Rs 1 crore to address this.

The MLA emphasized that funds from the 15th financial plan must be used only for drinking water projects. Under the Ganga Kalyan Yojana, 63 borewells were sanctioned for backward classes and minorities, with 33 already distributed. Next Saturday, six borewells will be inaugurated in Vibhutekere Panchayat.

Hussain also highlighted irrigation work at Kalegoudanadoddy costing Rs 28 crore, and that Avverahalli lake has already been filled from the Cauvery river. Additionally, 26 lakes in Kailancha will benefit under the project. Sewing machines are being distributed to girls to help them build livelihoods. Development works, including Gudali Puja for multiple projects, were inaugurated in Achchu, Kumbhapur Colony, Channamanahalli, and Mottedoddy villages. Local leaders and officials attended the event.

Commercial LPG supply halted in Tumkur district

TUMKUR

Soumya, Deputy Director in Tumkur, confirmed commercial LPG cylinder shortages affecting hotels and restaurants, advising temporary alternatives, while domestic household LPG supplies remain unaffected.

The supply of commercial LPG cylinders has been stopped in Tumkur district for the past three days, creating difficulties for hotels and other businesses that depend on cooking gas.

Soumya, Deputy Director of the District Food and Civil Supplies Department Tumkur, confirmed the disruption and said officials have advised business owners to temporarily find alternative arrangements until the supply resumes.

Speaking about the situation, Soumya said the shortage currently affects only commercial LPG cylinders used by hotels, restaurants and other establishments. She clarified that there is no shortage of domestic LPG cylinders supplied to households.

According to the department, domestic cylinders are being distributed normally based on customer bookings. Officials said they have collected information from representatives of oil companies before confirming that household supplies remain stable.

The government has also issued instructions to ensure that essential institutions such as hospitals, hostels and residential homes do not face any disruption in LPG supply.

Authorities warned that strict action will be taken if domestic LPG cylinders are used for commercial purposes. Soumya said cases will be registered against hotels or businesses found misusing household gas cylinders.

Following instructions from the district administration, inspections are being carried out at gas agencies across the district to monitor cylinder availability and distribution.

Due to the shortage of commercial cylinders, many hotels in the district have temporarily reduced their operations. Some restaurants have limited their service to tea and coffee, while a few roadside eateries have started using firewood for cooking.

Officials said the supply of commercial LPG cylinders will resume once regular distribution from suppliers begins again.

The project ensures village development with infrastructure and facilities, coordinating with the Urban Development Authority for progress monitoring

Vijayapura officials push GIS master plan awareness drive

VIJAYAPURA

Officials have launched a major awareness drive for the GIS-based Master Plan under the Amrutha Project, aimed at improving infrastructure and services in Vijayapura city and surrounding Gram Panchayats.

At a meeting held in the Zilla Panchayat hall, Chief Executive Officer Rishi Anand emphasized the need to inform residents of nine Gram Panchayats about the project. He said the Local Master Plan-2041 (GIS-based P-3) has received provisional government approval, and suggestions from local development officers have been incorporated.

The project aims to ensure villages develop alongside the rapidly growing city, providing benefits such as better roads, water supply, electricity, sewage systems, markets, transport, and facilities for backward communities. Officials were instructed to coordinate with the Urban Development Authority and submit relevant documents for progress tracking.

The local planning area includes 17 villages covering 525 square kilometers. Under the Amrutha scheme, Vijayapura is among 26 selected cities in Karnataka to receive infrastructure improvements. The GIS-based master plan uses satellite images, revenue maps, and mobile applications to map current constructions and project growth. The city's population of 3,87,935 is projected to rise to 8,75,000 by 2041. The plan covers urbanization boundaries of 15,591 hectares and outlines zoning for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional growth. It includes provisions for housing, roads, parks, solid waste management, water supply, transport networks, educational infrastructure, and industrial development. Draft rules on building height, spacing, road widths, and safety measures have also been prepared.

Urban Development Authority Commissioner Rajashekar Dambal and development officers from various Gram Panchayats attended the meeting. The CEO urged all departments to submit details of planned and ongoing projects to ensure proper implementation of the master plan for balanced urban and rural development.

Political clash over Rs 700 crore flyover in Malur

KOLAR

The Rs 700 crore flyover project in Malur town has triggered a heated political battle between parties, with strong opinions on both sides. Leaders from the BJP and JD(S), along with local traders, have demanded that the state government halt the project immediately, citing concerns over its impact and feasibility.

Earlier this week, the opposition leaders held a rally in Malur, where they submitted a memorandum to the Tahsildar, urging the government to stop the flyover construction. Traders also joined the protest, expressing worries about business disruption and local inconvenience due to ongoing construction work.

In response, Congress leaders staged a massive counter-protest in Malur today, asserting that the flyover is vital for the town's future development. At 10:30 am, Congress workers marched from the Congress Bhavan to the Tahsildar office and held a demonstration, urging authorities not to halt the project. They stressed that the flyover would ease traffic congestion, improve connectivity, and benefit local residents in the long run. The political tussle has now intensified, with both sides appealing to the government to support their respective positions. Residents of Malur are watching closely, as the debate continues over whether the flyover will proceed smoothly or face delays due to political disagreements.

Medical College celebrates Women's Day with pride

CHITRADURGA

International Women's Day was celebrated with enthusiasm at Chitradurga Medical College and Research Institute recently, highlighting the achievements and contributions of women in various fields. The event brought together faculty members, staff, and students of the institution to mark the occasion.

As part of the celebration, the director and teaching staff greeted women students and employees by presenting them with roses as a gesture of appreciation and respect. The program aimed to recognize the important role played by women in society and encourage them to continue striving for excellence.

Speaking at the event, Head of the Department of Physiology and Nodal Officer Dr. Venu P.M. stressed the need to acknowledge the achievements of women in science, medicine, and even in services such as the country's Air Force. He said women should not only be respected as mothers but also encouraged to excel in areas like sports, research, and leadership. Dr. Venu also noted that Women's Day should not be seen as a mere formality but as a meaningful reminder to support women's growth and equality in every field.

Chitradurga moves ahead for tobacco-free villages

CHITRADURGA

Deputy Collector B.T. Kumaraswamy has urged officials to take stronger steps to make all villages in Chitradurga district tobacco free. He emphasized creating public awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco, especially among young people, during the quarterly progress review meeting of the District Tobacco Control Cell held at the Collector's office on Thursday.

Kumaraswamy expressed concern that tobacco consumption among youth is leading to serious health problems and premature deaths. He instructed the Health Department to spread awareness using audio jingles in garbage disposal vehicles and called for honoring Panchayat Development Officers who contribute to declaring villages tobacco free during the World No Tobacco Day on May 31.

The district had set a target of 120 tobacco control operations in the last four months but only 32 were conducted.

Chitradurga plans meaningful Bhagwan Mahavir Jayanti celebration

CHITRADURGA

The Bhagwan Mahavir Jayanti will be celebrated in a meaningful manner in Chitradurga on March 30, with the joint efforts of the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Kannada and Culture Department, Chitradurga Municipal Corporation, and the District Jain Sangha.

Assistant Director of the Kannada and Culture Department Dr. B.M. Gurunath shared this information while presiding over a preliminary meeting held at the Sub-Divisional Officer's office hall in the city on Thursday. He said the celebrations will begin at 11 am with floral tributes to the portrait of Bhagwan Mahavir at the District Collector's Office Hall.

During the event, Dr. Naveen Maskal of All India Radio will deliver a special lecture highlighting the life, teachings, and values of Bhagwan Mahavir. As per protocol, all district public representatives will be invited to participate in the program.

The meeting was attended by District Physical Education Officer Chidanandaswamy, District Jain Sangha trustees P. Ramesh Kumar Jain, P. Prithviraj Jain, and several officials from various departments.

FACULTY DOCUMENT CHECK

Site inspection conducted for new postgraduate courses

CHITRADURGA

Officials from the Local Inspection Committee (LIC) of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences visited Chitradurga Medical College and Research Institute on Wednesday to conduct a thorough inspection in preparation for starting the MBBS course and postgraduate MD degree programs in four departments for the academic year 2026–27.

The committee included Dr. Vinuta Rao, Principal of Bangalore MVAA Naturopathy and Vedic Science College, along with Dr. Shruti H.P. of Padmashri Institute of Allied Health Sciences and Dr. Narayana Murthy of Basaveshwara Medical College, Chitradurga.

The team arrived at 9:30 am and began inspections shortly after, reviewing attendance records, declaration forms, and documents of all teaching staff. The committee also conducted a detailed tour of all academic departments and the teaching hospital to ensure compliance with regulatory standards for the new courses. Dr. B.Y. Yuvaraj, Dean and Director of Chitradurga Medical College and Research Institute, expressed gratitude to the LIC members for their visit and for conducting the evaluation to facilitate the introduction of the postgraduate programs.

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-3, 1st Floor, BBMP Building, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560052.

No.DGM-3/BSWML/TEND/25/2025-26 Date:12.03.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)

(Only through GOK KPP Portal Only)

The Deputy General Manager-3, BSWML on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites the tender from eligible bidders for the works detailed in the table below. The Tender documents can be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website (**https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**) on payment of prescribed fee noted against each item of work (non-refundable) in the form of e-Payment through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. The Bidder shall submit the bid through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. Other details may be seen in the bid document.

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Amount put to tender Rs.in lakhs (Excluding GST)	EMD (in Rupees)	Stipulated Period of Contract
1	Inert Landfill Area Protection and Nuisance Reduction Works in and around Hullahalli Inert Landfill Site in Bengaluru South Constituency, including enzyme spraying, safety measures and allied basic infrastructure works.	**1684.15**	16,84,158.00	9 Months
2	Odour Abatement and Peripheral Infrastructure Works around Chikkanagamangala Processing Plant in Anekal constituency, including enzyme spraying and allied improvement works.	**4002.00**	40,20,000.00	12 Months

Calendar of Events : (1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries**: 20.03.2026 upto 15.00 Hrs.** in KPP Portal (2) Pre bid meeting **: 23.03.2026 at 15.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM-2 (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore (3) Last date for submission of the bids : **06.04.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs** (4) Date of opening of Technical bids on : **07.04.2026 at 16.30 Hrs** (5) Date of opening of Financial bids will be notified to technically qualified bidders.

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-3
BSWML, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/SHIRDI SAI/6217/2025-26

QUICK READ

Preparations underway for upcoming Jayanti celebrations

Haveri

Additional District Magistrate Dr. Nagaraj A. instructed the district administration to prepare for meaningful celebrations of Sri Devara Dasimayya, Sri Agnibanniraya, and Bhagwan Mahavira Jayantis. Presiding over a preliminary meeting at the District Magistrate's office hall, he emphasized following government guidelines, including invitations, banners, lecturer selection, seating, and stage arrangements. Shah-Kozhu and Gram Panchayats were asked to issue orders for local celebrations. Sri Devara Dasimayya Jayanti will be observed on March 24 and Sri Agnibanniraya on March 27 at Gandhi Bhavan. Plans for Lord Mahavir Jayanti on March 30 await government approval. Community leaders and officials offered suggestions.

Village petition seeks protection for temple land

Hunsur

Residents of Kasaba Hobli, Kirijaji, have raised concerns over illegal encroachments on the premises of Sriranganath Swamy Temple and adjacent vacant land. To protect the property and prevent unauthorized occupation, village head Shivanna Mahesh Dhananjay submitted a petition to Tahsildar Manjunath. The petition requests the installation of an official notice board on the land, signaling government ownership and authority. Villagers hope the step will safeguard the temple grounds and surrounding area for community use. Authorities have yet to respond, but locals remain optimistic that the action will deter future encroachments.

HT, EHT consumers meeting scheduled March 18

Ballari

A grievance meeting has been organized on March 18 at 11 am in the first-floor hall of the Ballari Zonal Office to address concerns of HT and EHT electricity consumers under Ballari Rural GESCOM division. The session will be presided over by the Superintendent Engineer (V) of the Ballari GESCOM Work and Maintenance Circle. Electricity consumers from Ballari, Kampli, Siruguppa, Kurugodu, and Sandur rural sub-divisions are invited to participate and raise issues. The Executive Engineer emphasized the meeting aims to find practical solutions and improve electricity services in the region.

Chaluvarayaswamy hits back at Kumaraswamy over grants

The minister stated ₹10,000 crore was granted for Mandya development, emphasizing citizens' right to demand accountability over MPs' inquiries

MANDYA

N. Chaluvarayaswamy, Karnataka's Agriculture and Mandya district in-charge minister, said that people of the district have the right to seek an account of government funds, responding sharply to remarks made by Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy.

He was speaking after inaugurating construction work of a 220 KV power substation near Somanahalli in Maddur taluk on Thursday.

The minister said that after the Congress government came to power in the state, around ₹10,000 crore in grants had been released for development works in Mandya district. He added that while some MPs have asked for details of the spending, it is the people of the district who have the real right to demand accountability.

Chaluvarayaswamy said Mandya has received one of the highest allocations in the state in the last three years, second only to Mysuru district. He noted that there had been a long-standing demand for a 220 KV substation in Maddur for nearly 25 years, which is now becoming a reality.

He credited the efforts of K. M. Uday, MLA of the constituency, for pushing the project forward. The substation is being constructed at a cost of ₹188 crore and is expected to solve electricity problems in the region.

The minister also said the government is not limited to implementing guarantee schemes but is also focusing on major development projects such as modernization of canals linked to the Krishna Raja Sagara Dam.

Other leaders including Ramesh Bandisidde Gowda and Dinesh Gooligowda attended the event and praised the project, stating it would improve power supply to villages, farmers, drinking water projects and industrial areas in the region.

Bomb threat email triggers panic at Mandya Court

MANDYA

Police, bomb disposal, and fire teams, led by Gangadhar Swamy, inspected the court, conducted detailed searches, and ensured safety after a tense security incident in the complex

Panic briefly gripped the premises of the Mandya District Court after authorities received a bomb threat email on Thursday, forcing court proceedings to be stopped temporarily.

According to officials, the threat message was sent to the email account of the district judge. Soon after the mail was noticed, judges, lawyers and court staff moved out of the building as a precaution.

Police teams, along with bomb disposal squad and fire brigade personnel, rushed to the spot and began checking the premises. Senior police officers, including Gangadhar Swamy, inspected the area and supervised the security operation.

The incident created tension inside the court complex for some time. Authorities carried out a detailed search of the building to ensure the safety of everyone present.

This is not the first time such a threat has been received. A similar bomb threat email had also been sent to the Mandya court on February 16, which had led to a large-scale security check. After investigation, officials had then confirmed that the threat was a hoax.

Advocate Satyananda said misuse of technology by miscreants to send such threats is a serious concern. He urged the police department to identify those responsible and take strict action to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Another lawyer, Mahesh Krishna, said courts are places where large numbers of people gather, so such threats naturally create fear among the public.

Police said an investigation is underway to trace the source of the email and determine whether the threat was genuine or another hoax.

Leaders urged the government to allocate ₹600 crore in the budget for tribal rehabilitation, ensuring credibility and addressing longstanding issues

Tribal leaders criticize budget, demand rehabilitation funds

HUNSUR

Several tribal leaders have criticized the state budget presented by Siddaramaiah, saying it is large in size but fails to address the concerns of tribal communities.

Leaders of different tribal organizations said the government has not taken steps to rehabilitate 3,418 tribal families despite a High Court order issued nearly ten years ago. They described the budget as inadequate and urged the government to take immediate action.

Among those who spoke were Harsha, President of the Adivasi Janata Parliament, Jayappa, President of the Tribal Farmers Association, Lakshmi, President of the Women's Association, former Legal Services Authority member Vithalananchchi, Hadi Forest Rights Committees Federation President Tekla Hadi Shivanna and Deed Institute President Dr. S. Srikanth.

They said the government has ignored repeated requests

Tribal Communities Empowerment Programme
Organised by: DEED - Development Through Education
H.D. Kote Road, Hunsur-07105

for justice to tribal families who are waiting for rehabilitation. According to them, not implementing the High Court order is an insult to the democratic system.

The leaders demanded that the government allocate at least Rs 600 crore in the ongoing budget discussions to begin rehabilitation work. They said such a decision would protect the credibility of the government and address long-pending issues of tribal communities.

They also placed several other demands before the government. These include recognition of forest rights, strengthening about 1,500 forest rights committees, implementing the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996, forming Adivasi panchayats and declaring tribal areas as scheduled areas.

The leaders also called for better education facilities in government and ashram schools in tribal regions and demanded development of Hunsur as a new district.

They welcomed the proposal to form an Adivasi Development Corporation but said funds must be allocated for it immediately.

Ediga leader threatens siege over community demands

KOPPAL

Sri Pranavananda Swamiji, a prominent leader of the Ediga community, has warned that the community will lay siege to the house of Koppal in-charge Minister Shivraj Thangadgi on April 6.

Addressing reporters at Patrika Bhawan on Thursday, Swamiji said the state government has failed to honor promises made during the community's 708-kilometer march from Chittapur to Bengaluru.

Swamiji criticized that even though seven Ediga representatives are in the government, they have not raised their voices for the community. He accused Minister Madhu Bangarappa of pressuring the Chief Minister to block the community's demands and called several leaders "traitors" for neglecting the poor and needy.

A key demand of the community is the restoration of the sale of henna and sugarcane products, which many families depend on for livelihood.

KKCCI demands parking complex for Kalaburagi market

KALABURAGI

The Kalyana Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KKCCI) has urged authorities to immediately construct a multi-level parking complex in the busy Super Market area of Kalaburagi to ease traffic congestion and improve business activity.

Addressing a press conference, KKCCI President Sharanbasappa M. Pappa and Secretary Shivaraj Inginshetty said the absence of proper parking facilities has caused serious problems for traders and customers in the market area.

According to them, traffic congestion, roadside encroachments and unregulated street vending have affected the business environment around the Super Market area. They said footpaths are occupied by hawkers and pushcart vendors, making it difficult for pedestrians and shoppers.

Sharanbasappa Pappa said land has already been identified for building a multi-storey parking complex in the area and urged authorities not to change its purpose.

He also pointed out that the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB) has released ₹999 crore to the city corporation during 2024-25 and 2025-26 under its infrastructure development programme, which includes parking facilities in market areas. However, the project has not yet started.

KKCCI leaders also opposed the construction of temporary tin sheds on the land meant for the parking project. These sheds were reportedly

built to shift traders from the flower market. They requested the authorities to remove the sheds and restore the land so that work on the parking complex can begin soon.

The chamber also suggested relocating flower market traders and pushcart vendors to the vending sheds near the Old Jail area, which are currently underused and could be developed into a proper vending zone.

Mandya SSLC exam to be fully transparent

MANDYA

District Collector Dr. Kumar has instructed that the upcoming SSLC examination, scheduled from March 18 to April 2, be conducted with complete transparency and without any lapses.

Addressing officials at a meeting held in the Collector's office, he said that a total of 20,650 students will appear for the exam this year across 62 centers in the district.

To ensure fairness, all examination rooms will be equipped with CCTV cameras, and footage will be monitored from the District Collector's office.

The question papers will be securely locked in the district treasury and delivered to the centers one hour before the exam under police escort, with route officers overseeing 27 delivery routes.

Dr. Kumar emphasized the importance of providing basic amenities at the centers, including drinking water, clocks, seating arrangements, and uninterrupted power supply. Health personnel and police will be present at all centers, and buses will be arranged to ensure students from rural areas arrive on time.

To prevent cheating, mobile phones and smart devices will be collected by a designated custodian.

Teachers monitoring the exams must follow guidelines strictly, and any irregularities will result in strict action.

Zilla Panchayat CEO K.R. Nandini said teachers are responsible for maintaining the quality of the examination and supporting students during holidays to keep their focus. Officials from the School Education and Pre-Graduate Education Departments, municipal authorities, and tehsildars attended the meeting.

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact:
080-41209042

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have issued this public notice to bring to the knowledge of public at large that my clients Sri. Vinaykumar S/o Shantaraj R wants to purchase the Land bearing CTS No. 353/10, TMC No.26-20-171 (Old TMC No.353/10) Measuring 133.21 Sq. Mtrs. Situated at Anjanaya Nagar, Hukkeri Town, Hukkeri Tq, Belagavi Dt. from its present owner. Shri. Modinbeg Abbubeg Inamadar has sold above said property to Sri. Basavant Dattu Malage vide Sale Deed bearing Book No. 1, Volume No.1274 Page No. 216 to 218 Document No.810 dtd: 20-12-2017 it has been misplaced or lost.
My client wants to ensure as to whether any person, financial institutions or Government is having any charge, claim or litigation with respect to the above mentioned property. If any right, charge, claim or litigation is pending with respect to the said property of any person or institution, they shall contact me or my client with documentary proof within 7 days from date of publication of this advertisement in
written by RPAD. Otherwise my client is at liberty to purchase the property presuming that, there is no any claim, litigation, charge or right on the said property.

SCHEDULE PROPRETY

Immovable property bearing CTS No. 353/10, TMC No.26-20-171 (Old TMC No.353/10) Measuring 133.21 Sq. Mtrs. Situated at Anjanaya Nagar, Hukkeri Town, Hukkeri Tq, Belagavi Dt. Boundaries E: CTS No.12, W: TMC No.25-529-64, N: Road and S: TMC No.25-20-173.

Sd/- **CHANDRASHEKHAR M. MUGALI,**
Advocate
Court Circle, Chikkodi Road T.P. Complex, Opp. Head Post Office
Hukkeri-591309. M: 9448420791

ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಸವಿತಾ.ಎಂ.ಕೆ ಕೋಂ.ದೊಡ್ಡೇಗೌಡ, ನೇರಳೆಹಳ್ಳಿದೊಡ್ಡಿ ಗ್ರಾಮ, ಉಯ್ಯಂಬಳ್ಳಿ ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಕನಕಪುರ ತಾಲೂಕು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಕ್ಷಿಣ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಆದ ನಾನು ಈ ಹಿಂದೆ ನನ್ನ ಹೆಸರು ಅಂದರೆ ನನ್ನ ಎಸ್.ಎಸ್.ಎಲ್.ಸಿ ಅಂಕಪಟ್ಟಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಆಧಾರ್ ಕಾರ್ಡ್ ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನನ್ನ ಹೆಸರು ಚೂಡರತ್ನ.ಎಂ.ಕೆ. ಎಂದು ನಮೂದಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ತದನಂತರ ನನ್ನ ಹೆಸರು ಸವಿತಾ.ಎಂ.ಕೆ ಎಂದು ಎಲ್ಲ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯಾಗಿ ಈ ಮೇಲಿನ ಚೂಡರತ್ನ ಎಂ.ಕೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸವಿತಾ.ಎಂ.ಕೆ ಈ ಎರಡು ಹೆಸರಿನ ಏಕ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯೇ ಆಗಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ ಎಂದು ದೃಢೀಕರಿಸುತ್ತೇನೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದೆ ನನ್ನ ಹೆಸರು ಎಲ್ಲ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕವಾಗಿ ಸವಿತಾ.ಎಂ.ಕೆ ಎಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದು ವಿನಂತಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ.

AFFORDABLE LEARNING ACCESS

Hunsur school sees rising student enrollment

HUNSUR

Hunsur City's historic Government Higher Primary Boys' School has begun enrollment for the 2026-27 academic year, Karnataka Rakshana Vedike Karave District President Purushottam announced at a press conference held at the city's Journalists' Association office.

Purushottam said the school has been adopted and developed both physically and academically to provide quality education to children from middle- and low-income families. "We have worked hard to offer facilities that reduce the financial

burden of education and to convince parents that government schooling can match private systems," he added. The school's popularity has grown steadily, with 386 children enrolled in 2023-24, 314 in 2024-25, and 635 this year. Teachers provide high-quality education, and programs have expanded to include LKG and UKG classes, now entering their fourth year. English medium education has been introduced alongside Kannada, responding to parental demand, and the school follows the NCERT National Curriculum.

New learning facilities have also been added to enhance student experience. Purushottam emphasized the importance of supporting government schools to provide equal opportunities for education. The press conference was attended by Taluk Vice President Balaram, Nagar President Manohar Pasha, General Secretary Girish, Treasurer Ramesh, and senior journalist H K Krishna. Parents and students are encouraged to enroll early to benefit from the school's growing academic programs and facilities.

India Reviews Bangladesh Request for Diesel Supply Amid Global Energy Concerns

NEW DELHI

Speaking at a weekly media briefing in New Delhi, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal emphasised that India is a major exporter of refined petroleum products, particularly to neighbouring countries. He said that the government has received a formal request from Bangladesh seeking diesel supply and that the matter is being examined by the concerned authorities.

Jaiswal noted that India has maintained long-standing energy cooperation with Bangladesh. Since 2007, India has been supplying diesel from the Numaligarh Refinery through multiple channels, including waterways and rail transport. Later, the supply was also facilitated through the India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline, further strengthening energy connectivity between the two countries.

He also highlighted that a sale and purchase agreement was signed in October 2017 between Numaligarh Refinery Limited and the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation. The agreement allows the supply of high-speed diesel to Bangladesh on mutually agreed commercial terms.

According to the MEA, diesel exports to Bangladesh have largely continued since the signing of the agreement. However, Jaiswal clarified that decisions regarding additional supplies will be made after taking into account India's domestic refining capacity, internal fuel requirements and the availability of diesel.

The MEA spokesperson further said that Bangladesh is not the only country seeking fuel assistance from India. Similar requests have also been received from other neighbouring nations, including Sri Lanka and the Maldives. These requests are also under examination while keeping India's domestic energy needs in mind.

Meanwhile, reports from Bangladesh indicate that the ongoing conflict in West Asia is beginning to affect fuel markets in the region. A recent report in Bangladesh's leading newspaper, The Daily Star, said that fuel stations in cities such as Dhaka and Chattogram witnessed long queues as motorists rushed to purchase fuel amid fears of shortages.

The development highlights growing concerns over global fuel supply disruptions as geopolitical tensions continue to influence energy markets worldwide.

Akhilesh Yadav Meets Shankaracharya in Lucknow, Seeks Blessings and Guidance

LUCKNOW

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Akhilesh Yadav said he had visited the Shankaracharya to pay his respects and gain spiritual insight. He said the presence of the revered seer in the capital provided an opportunity for people to seek blessings and guidance.

I have just returned from meeting the revered Shankaracharya. And now that he has come to Lucknow, the capital, we all wished to seek his blessings. We came here to receive his blessings, learn from him, and gain some knowledge and guidance, Yadav said.

The Samajwadi Party leader also commented on the growing influence of social media in shaping public discourse. According to him, social media platforms have given people greater freedom to express their views, but they have also led to attempts to politicise many issues.

In today's time, social media is so widespread that everyone feels free to express their views. There is always someone trying to bring a political angle into everything. But I came here to seek blessings from Shankaracharya, he said.

Yadav further emphasised the importance of seeking blessings from spiritual leaders before beginning important or progressive work. He noted that guidance from saints and seers holds deep significance in Indian tradition.

Whenever we start any good or progressive work, receiving blessings from seers and sages is invaluable. The greatest benefit of receiving blessings from the respected Shankaracharya is that it signals the end of fake saints, he remarked.

During his interaction with the media, Yadav also referred to initiatives undertaken during the Samajwadi Party government for cow welfare. He said that the party had introduced several programmes aimed at cow protection and welfare during its tenure and reiterated that such efforts would continue in the future.

The meeting between the Samajwadi Party leader and the Shankaracharya drew attention in political circles, coming at a time when religious and social issues continue to play an important role in public discourse in Uttar Pradesh.

Railways Approve Train Stoppages at Ashoknagar and Kolaras, Says Jyotiraditya Scindia

GWALIOR

According to Scindia, the Union Railway Ministry has approved the stoppage of the Sogaria–Danapur Express at Ashoknagar railway station and the Ujjaini Express at Kolaras railway station. Both stations fall under the Guna Lok Sabha constituency, which is represented by Scindia in Parliament.

The Union Minister said that the decision will significantly improve travel options for passengers in the region by enhancing connectivity with different parts of the country. He noted that the move would benefit daily commuters, students, traders and other travellers who depend on rail services for transportation.

This crucial development will make travel more accessible and convenient for passengers in the region. It will not only facilitate daily commuters, students and businessmen, but will also provide a new impetus to regional transportation and economic activities, Scindia said in a statement.

CPI(M) Reacts to G. Sudhakaran's Plan to Contest Ambalappuzha Seat as Independent

ALAPPUZHA

Reacting to the development, R. Nazar, the district secretary of the CPI(M) in Alappuzha, said the party had treated the former minister with considerable respect even after he was replaced as the party's candidate for the Ambalappuzha constituency.

According to Nazar, Sudhakaran had continued to receive recognition and status within the organisation despite not being fielded as the candidate. He added that the party had even allotted him a special room at the district committee office.

Based on his request, he was drafted into a newly formed branch committee. But gradually it was he who began to distance himself from the party, Nazar said. He also noted that when reports surfaced suggesting Sudhakaran might not renew his party membership, senior leaders personally met him to persuade him to remain with the party.

Nazar emphasised that the CPI(M) has always regarded Sudhakaran with great respect, particularly because he is the brother of a martyr associated with the party's history. Despite the recent announcement, he said the party leadership still hopes the veteran leader will reconsider his decision.

Echoing similar sentiments, CPI(M) general secretary M. A. Baby described the situation as very unfortunate. Baby, who had served alongside Sudhakaran in the state cabinet in the past, expressed regret over the development. Meanwhile, Kerala minister Saji Cherian said that while contesting the election was Sudhakaran's personal choice, the move would not have even the slightest impact on the party's strength in Alappuzha district. He also stated that the CPI(M) had done nothing to betray Sudhakaran in a way that would justify his decision to break away from the party.

Meghalaya CM reviews ground situation in Tura after two days of unrest

SHILLONG

Normalcy is gradually returning to Tura in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district after two days of unrest, with Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma on Thursday visiting several affected areas and directing officials to immediately provide food assistance to residents impacted by the disturbances. During his visit, Sangma interacted with local residents and reviewed the ground situation in parts of the town that witnessed incidents of vandalism and arson. He also instructed the district administration to ensure that essential supplies reach communities facing shortages following the unrest. Residents informed the Chief Minister that nearly 17 communities in and around the Araimile locality are currently facing shortages of rice and other essential commodities due to disruptions caused by the violence.

Taking note of the situation, Sangma directed the Deputy Commissioner of West Garo Hills district to coordinate with local development committees and prepare a list of affected households so that relief materials can be distributed promptly.

The administration must ensure that the affected families receive immediate support and essential supplies, the Chief Minister said during the visit.

CM Sangma also inspected several damaged properties and assured residents that the government would extend necessary assistance to those whose shops, homes or establishments were affected in the incidents.

CITY CORPORATION VIJAYAPUR
No:CCV/PWD/EE/DMA/TND/E-proc/2025-26 /5576
Dated:09.03.2026

KPP PORTAL SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Executive Engineer, City Corporation Vijayapur invites tenders from eligible tenders registered the **1) 12 works under Corporation Fund 2025-26, 2) 01 work under Census Grant and 3) 01 work under Amrut 2.0 Fund** Tenders are called in standard tender document through E-preocurement portal. for further details visit online web site **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**.

Note: 1) Tender Corrigendum and Addendum will be issued in kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal only.

1)Last date for Tender submission:18.03.2026

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
City Corporation, Vijayapur

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/791/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

Govt of Karnataka
O/o Executive Engineer, PWD, Udupi Division
Udupi - 576101. C.No : (0820) 2531802
No.PWD:UDN:NIT-52:2025-26:AE-2 Dated: 12.03.2026

Short term Tender Notification

It is here by notified for the information of intending eligible registered contractor in Karnataka PWD, through e-portal **"kppp.karnataka.gov.in"** as per Karnataka tranperency in public procurement act - 2023, as per specified terms & condition notified there in. The Last date for submission of tender on **24.03.2026** through E-procurement portal **"kppp.karnataka.gov.in"** under **SDMF & CMIDP** head, work costing **Rs. 25.16 Lakhs to 238.07 Lakhs 13 work.** For more information contact office during office hours.

Sd/-, Executive Engineer,
Public works department
Udupi Division, Udupi.

DIPR/ADU/KSMCA/778/25-26 Dt: 12.03.2026

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL,
Dam Safety Unit-2, Almatti- 586201.
E-mail:dam_division@rediffmail.com
No: KBJNL/DDA/PB/TND/2025-26/3240 Dated:11.03.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore the undersigned invites tender on Item Highest Cost Selection (H-1) from the eligible contractors for the work indents of **Two Cover**– (1) I.No. SE0266 Call-02 – 360.01 Lakhs (Others) **The contractor can have access and submit e-tender from 12.03.2026 to 21.03.2026 up to 5-00 PM. Pre-Bid Meeting Chief Engineer, KBJNL Dam Zone Almatti For I.No. SE0266 Call-2 is 17.03.2026 Cover-II (Technical Bid) will be opened on 24.03.2026 at 11-00 AM And Financial Bid Will be Opened on 27.03.2026** at the Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2 Almatti-586201. For clarifications office of the undersigned may be contacted during office hours (Phone No. 08426-281027). Further information about electronic tendering can be had from kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2, Almatti

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/799/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

Govt. of Karnataka
Office of the Deputy Conservator of Forests Cauvery Wildlife Division, Kollegal
E-Mail: dcfcauverywl@gmail.com Office: 08224-253027
No. A2/BUD/Tender/CR-20/2025 Dated: 12.03.2026

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION

During the year 2025-26 tender has been called through kppp Portal to taken up the rail's transportation and Construction of Railway Barricade in Halagur, Sangama and Muggur Wildlife Range of Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary. But Due to some technical reason, tender not Published, Hence Interested registered contractors can participate in the tender Publishing on 12.03.2026 through kppp Portal (**http://kppp.karnataka. gov.in**). for further details can contact the under signed office in the office hours.

Deputy Conservator of
Forests, Cauvery Wildlife
Division Kollegal

NO: DIPR: CHANAGAR: 786:2025-26

ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪಂಚಾಯತ್, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ
ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಡಳಿತ ಭವನ,#ಎಸ್.ಬಿ.4, 2ನೇ ಮಹಡಿ,
ಶಿಡ್ಲಘಟ್ಟ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08156–277053
Email:dobcmchikkaballapura.gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಹಿಂವಕಇ/ಚಿಪುರ/ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ–53/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11.03.2026

: :ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ: :

2026–27ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ, ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು ಕಛೇರಿ, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಥಿನಿಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತು ವಸತಿ ಶಾಲೆ/ಕಾಲೇಜುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ ಗ್ರೂಪ್ 'ಸಿ' ಮತ್ತು 'ಡಿ' ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳನ್ನು ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕವಾಗಿ ಹೊರಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲದಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಲು ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ಏಜನ್ಸಿ/ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ (E-Procurement) ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

(1) ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13.04.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ. (2) ಪೂರ್ವಭಾವಿ ಸಭೆ (Pre Bid) ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23.03.2026 ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ 11:00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ. (3) ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 15.04.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 5:30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ. (4) ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 18.04.2026 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ 10:30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ದಾರರು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು kpp Protal ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ ನಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಡುವುದು (ದೂ.ಸಂ: +91–8046010000, +91–8068948777) ಹಾಗೂ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಡಳಿತ ಭವನ, #ಎಸ್‌ಬಿ–4, 2ನೇ ಮಹಡಿ, ಶಿಡ್ಲಘಟ್ಟ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. (ಕಛೇರಿ ದೂ.ಸಂ: 08156–277053).

ಸಹಿ/–
ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ
ಹಿಂದುಳಿದ ವರ್ಗಗಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ
ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ/ಆರ್.ಓ.ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:485/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರ ಕಛೇರಿ
ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ.
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕಾಅ:ಪಂರಾಇಂವಿ: ಮಂಡ್ಯ: ಟೆಂಪ್ರಸಂ–2:2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11.03.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 57/2025–26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರುರವರ ಪರವಾಗಿ, ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ ಮಂಡ್ಯರವರಿಂದ, ಮಳವಳ್ಳಿ ವಿಧಾನ ಸಭಾಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳ ವಿಶೇಷ ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿ 5054 ಯೋಜನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮುಖ್ಯ ಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳ ಮೂಲಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆಯ ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆಯಡಿ ಅನುಮೋದನೆಯಾಗಿರುವ 03 ಪ್ಯಾಕೇಜ್/ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಐಟಂವಾರು ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**, ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ನಿಗಧಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **18.03.2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 4.30ಗಂಟೆ** ವರೆಗೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಅಥವಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಪಂ.ರಾ.ಇಂ. ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯರವರ ಕಛೇರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು,
ಪಂ.ರಾ.ಇಂ.ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಮಂಡ್ಯ/ಕರಡಿ ಸಾಯಿ/885/2025–26

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ,
ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ವಿಭಾಗ,
ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ವೃತ್ತ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು
ಸಂ:ಕಾ.ಇಂ(ವಿ)/ಲೋ.ಇ/ವಿದ್ಯುತ್/2025–26/2924 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12.03.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು (ವಿದ್ಯುತ್), ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರ ವತಿಯಿಂದ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು KW-2 & KW-3 STD ಷರತ್ತುಗೊಳಪಟ್ಟಂತೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ಮೊದಲನೆ ಕರೆಯನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ KPPP ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತಿವೆ:

ಕ್ರ ಸಂ.	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್‌ಗಳು	ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ. ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)
1	PWD/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT22633	26.49
2	PWD/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT22634	81.36
3	PWD/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT22635	77.97

ಮೇಲಿನ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಇಚ್ಛಿಸುವವರು ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯೂಮೆಂಟ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10.03.2026 ರಿಂದ 24.03.2026, 16.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ** ಹಾಗೂ ಭರ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಹಿಂತಿರುಗಿಸುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 24.03.2026 ರಂದೆ 16.00 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ** ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ **KPPP** ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿಯನ್ನು ಕೆಲಸದ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು (ವಿ)

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಉನಿ–ಪಿ.ಪಿ/6200/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

Government of Karnataka
PUBLIC WORKS, DEPARTMENT
Chamarajanagara Division, Chamarajanagara
E-mail: eecnr@kpwd.gov.in/pwdeechgr@gmail.com Phone/Fax: 08226-222027

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal only)
H(Two Cover System: Section-1-Technical Bid and Section-2-Financial Bid)
Short Term Tender Notification No 37/2025-26 Dated: 07.03.2026 (Call-4)

Item rate tenders are invited through Kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal only on behalf of Governer of Karnataka from Eligible registered civil Contractor in KPWD in Standard Bid document **KW-4** form The Total no of works is 1, **H/A :- 5054-03-337-0-16-154 SH Bridge Works** maximum estimated cost is Rs, 1500.00 lakhs, Further changes in this Notification will be Published in Kppp.karnataka.gov.in Only. Date of events as follows:

1	Date and Time for downloading the tender document from the **Kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal**	From 11.03.2026 to 20.03.2026 upto 16.30 Hrs.
2	Pre-Bid Meeting Date	13.03.2026 in Division Office Meeting Hall at 11.00AM
3	downloading the tender document from the Last Date and Time	20.03.2026 Up to 16.30 Hrs
4	Date & Time for opening of Technical bid	23.03.2026 after 16.30 Hrs.
5	Date & Time for opening of Financial bid	24.03.2026 after 16.30 Hrs.

More information can be had from the web site: **https://www.Kppp.karnataka.gov.in** & Any other details required can be obtained from office of the under signed during office hours.

Executive Engineer,
PWD Division,
Chamarajanagar

NO: DIPR:CHANAGAR: 785:2025-26

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact: **080-41209042**

MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LIMITED
FORMERLY MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE PVT LTD
CIN : U65923KL2010PLC039179
Regd Office: 8/596 A, Padmaprabha Building, Near Sreerama Swami Temple, Cherppu - Thriprayar Road, Thriprayar, Thrissur, Kerala 680567
Phone No.: 0487-3520504, **Website:** www.manappuramhomefin.com | **Branch: HUBLI**

SALE CUM AUCTION NOTICE

We are issuing this Sale Notice to the Borrower/s, Co-borrower/s and Guarantor/s mentioned in Sr. No. 1 under the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, advising them to clear the liability as mentioned below within 30 days from this date failing which the secured property mentioned in below description will be sold by Public Auction as detailed under the provisions of Section 13(4) of sub rule 6 of Rule 8 of the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, on the date mentioned below for recovery of dues. Also giving Auction Notice to the Borrower/s, Co-borrower/s and Guarantor/s mentioned in Sr. No. 1 under the said act.

Sr. No.	Loan Account Number	Borrower/s, Co-borrower/s & Guarantor/s Name	Description of the Immovable Property	Date of Possession	Outstanding Due Amount in Rs.	Reserve Price and EMD amount in Rs.	Property Inspection Date	Auction Date & Time
1	NVAP002 6028624 & NHL002 60028625	RAJAMA NOORAAHMAD GOUNDI, HUSENABI NOOR AHMAD GOUNDI & RAJAK SAIPUDDIN GOUNDI	G P No: 495, Property No: 15010020200120569, Measuring East To West 10Mtr & North To South: 10 Mtrs, Total Measuring 100 Sq Mtrs, Situated At Kaladagi Village, Kaladagi Gram Panchayath, Tq/Dt-Bagalkot, P.O. Kaladgi, Bagalkot, Karnataka, Pin: 587204. **East -** Road, **West -** Plot No.476, **South -** Plot No.494, **North -** Plot No.496.	21-01-2026	Rs. 3,18,657/- & Rs. 19,242/-	Rs. 7,75,980/- & Rs. 1,93,995/-	18-03-2026	18-04-2026 till 03:00 PM

Place of Auction: MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LTD, Shop No. 4 & 5 on the first floor, "SKI Heights" at Vidyanagar, Hubballi, Karnataka Pin-580025
Terms & Conditions: [1] To participate in the Auction, the intending bidders have to deposit earnest money by way of DD favouring "MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LIMITED". **[2]** The Successful Bidder have to pay 25% of the Bid Amount immediately on the Sale being decided in his / her favour excluding the earnest money deposited and the balance sale price is to be remitted within 15 days from the date of communication of sale. **[3]** If the Successful Bidder defaults in effecting payments or fails to adhere to the terms of Sale in any manner, the amount already deposited will be forfeited and he / she shall not have any claim on such forfeited amount. **[4]** If for any reason, on the day of Public Auction, the reserve price is not materialized then the Authorized Officer reserves the right to call for tender / private treaty without giving any further notice to the Borrower/s, Co-borrower/s, Guarantor/s and general public at large, to deal with the property concerned, at a convenient date thereafter. **[5]** The Sale will be on "as is where is basis" and "as is what is basis", persons interested should make their own independent inquiries as to the title of the property and claims/dues from Govt. / Semi Govt. Department if any, affecting the property. Any statutory or other dues payable and due on these properties shall have to be borne by the purchasers/bidders only. All the expenses of whatever nature including stamp duty, registration charges, transfer fee, etc. of getting property transferred shall be borne by the purchaser only and the Company shall not in any way be liable for the same. **[6]** The Authorized Officer reserves the right to accept or reject all or any of the bids or postpone / cancel the auction without assigning any reason there of including addition or deletion of terms and conditions of this advertisement / sale without any Notice, at his discretion. **[7]** The intending bidder on remitting the EMD amount may verify the copies of the property documents held by the Company during the office hours before the Auction date. **[8]** Please note that this is not an Offer to sell the property described above but only an invitation to the public to make an Offer to purchase by participating in the Auction/bidding.

Date: 13/3/2026 | **Place:** Karnataka **Sd/- Authorised Officer, For Manappuram Home Finance Ltd**

RN RAVI SWORN IN AS WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR

Key opposition leaders skipped the event; despite an invite, LoP in the West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari did not turn up

KOLKATA

The swearing-in ceremony took place at Lok Bhavan, formerly known as Raj Bhavan, in Kolkata and began at 11:30 am. The oath of office was administered by Calcutta High Court Chief Justice Sujoy Paul.

Several prominent political leaders and dignitaries attended the event, including West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Speaker of the Assembly Biman Bandopadhyay, and Left Front Chairman Biman Bose.

However, the ceremony also drew attention due to the absence of key opposition leaders. Despite receiving an invitation, Leader of the Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari did not attend the event. Notably, no representative from the

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was present at the swearing-in ceremony, which surprised many political observers.

R.N. Ravi succeeds C.V. Ananda Bose, who resigned from the post on the evening of March 5. Soon after Bose stepped down, Ravi's appointment as the next Governor of West Bengal was announced the same evening. Ravi arrived in Kolkata ahead of the oath-taking ceremony.

Interestingly, shortly after Ravi reached the city, outgoing Governor C.V. Ananda Bose departed for his hometown in Kerala. Before leaving, Bose shared an emotional Open Letter addressed to the people of West Bengal on Lok Bhavan's official social media handle. In the message, he expressed deep gratitude and stated that his emotional bond with the people of West Bengal would remain strong even after his tenure.

With Ravi's appointment, West Bengal has once again seen a former Intelligence Bureau chief take charge as Governor. He becomes the second IB super-cop to hold the position in the past one-and-a-half decades.

Earlier, ahead of the crucial 2011 West Bengal Assembly elections that ended the 34-year-long Left Front rule and brought Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress to power, former IB chief and National Security Adviser M.K. Narayanan had served as the Governor of the state.

Ravi's tenure now begins at a politically significant time in West Bengal, with the state's dynamic political landscape continuing to attract national attention.

QUICK READ

Ahmedabad court evacuated after bomb threat email

Ahmedabad

Authorities evacuated the Ahmedabad Metropolitan Court on Thursday after a bomb email threat was received, leading authorities to carry out an extensive search operation. The email was received at around 4 a.m. but was noticed by court officials at about 10:30 a.m. when the court opened for the day, according to police. The message warned that the premises would be blown up and instructed people present in the complex to evacuate. Following the alert, lawyers, litigants and court staff were moved out of the premises as a precaution, and security personnel began checking the building and surrounding areas.

SC grants bail to Kashmiri separatist leader in terror funding case

New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Thursday granted bail to Kashmiri separatist leader Shabir Ahmed Shah in a terror funding case. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta granted relief to the 74-year-old leader, noting his prolonged period of incarceration and the delay in the completion of the trial. Shah had challenged the Delhi High Court's order rejecting his bail plea. He was arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in 2019 in connection with the terror funding case. In his plea before the top court, Shah contended that he had been in custody for more than six years, and that the trial was progressing at a slow pace, with only 15 out of about 400 witnesses examined so far.

Arlekar takes oath as Acting Governor of TN

CHENNAI

Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, who was appointed by President of India Droupadi Murmu on March 5 to discharge the functions of Governor of Tamil Nadu, assumed his gubernatorial office at Lok Bhavan in Chennai on Thursday. The oath of office was administered by the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, Justice Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari, in the presence of several senior political leaders, ministers and government officials. The development comes after the resignation of CV Ananda Bose as the Governor of West Bengal. Following his departure, President Droupadi Murmu reassigned Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi to take charge as the Governor of West Bengal. In light of this transition, Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, who is currently serving as the Governor of Kerala, has been given the additional responsibility of functioning as the Acting Governor of Tamil Nadu until further arrangements are made by the Centre. Arlekar arrived in Chennai late night ahead of the swearing-in ceremony. The event drew the presence of several prominent figures from Tamil Nadu's political and administrative circles, reflecting the significance of the occasion. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin attended the ceremony along with Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Speaker M. Appavu. Several senior members of the state cabinet were also present during the event. Among those in attendance were Ministers K.N. Nehru, M.R.K. Panneerselvam, E.V. Velu, Raghupathi, M. Subramanian and Sekar Babu. Political leaders from different parties also participated in the ceremony.

Barpeta Medical College renaming row: Gogoi slams govt move

GUWAHATI

In a statement posted on social media, Gogoi expressed deep concern over the decision and said the move undermines the legacy of one of Assam's most prominent personalities. He noted that Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed was not only a respected freedom fighter but also the first Assamese to serve as the President of India.

Ahmed served as the fifth President of India from 1974 until his death in 1977. During his tenure, he held the country's highest constitutional office and is remembered for his contributions to national politics as well as for representing Assam on the national stage.

Gogoi said that removing Ahmed's name from the Barpeta-based medical college raises serious questions about the rationale behind the decision taken by the state government.

According to the Congress leader, such a move could hurt the sentiments of people in Assam who regard Ahmed as an important historical figure.

The Assam government's decision to remove the name of Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed from the Barpeta Medical College is extremely unfortunate and deeply hurtful to the sentiments of the people of Assam, Gogoi said in his statement.

He further alleged that the decision could be politically motivated and questioned whether the state government was attempting to pursue divisive politics for electoral gains. Gogoi warned that actions like these risk erasing the legacy of eminent Assamese personalities who have played a significant role in the country's history.

The Congress MP emphasised that Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed's contributions as a freedom fighter and national leader should be respected and preserved. He also suggested that historical figures who have represented Assam at the highest levels of governance deserve recognition and remembrance in public institutions.

The controversy surrounding the medical college's name has sparked debate in political circles, with critics arguing that altering the names of institutions associated with prominent historical figures can lead to unnecessary political disputes and public discontent.

MP welcomes TMC move to bring motion against CEC

NEW DELHI

Trinamool Congress MP Kirti Azad on Thursday criticised Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar and supported the party's plan to move an impeachment motion against him, alleging that the Election Commission was not functioning impartially.

Speaking outside Parliament, Azad said the actions of the Chief Election Commissioner raised serious concerns about the neutrality of the poll body.

This is not the CEC; this is the Bharatiya Janata Party's CEC. The way the Election Commission is functioning, even after several Supreme Court observations, raises serious questions, he said.

Azad claimed that the Trinamool Congress delegation was treated disrespectfully when they went to meet officials.

Our delegation that went to meet the Election Commission was treated in a disrespectful manner. They were spoken to improperly, and there were women members present as well. You can understand the mentality from the way they were treated, he said.

Azad also claimed that the functioning of the Chief Election Commissioner was not in accordance with constitutional principles.

The way the CEC is working appears unconstitutional. That is why we, along with other opposition parties, are raising our voice against it, he added.

The Trinamool Congress is reportedly exploring the possibility of moving an impeachment motion against the Chief Election Commissioner in Parliament. For such a motion to be admitted, the signatures of at least 100 Members of Parliament in the Lok Sabha and at least 50 MPs in the Rajya Sabha are required.

According to the 2023 law governing the appointment and functioning of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners, the CEC cannot be removed from office except in a manner similar to that used for removing a judge of the Supreme Court.

This means that the removal of a Chief Election Commissioner requires an impeachment motion passed in both Houses of Parliament. The motion must be approved by a special majority — a majority of the total membership of the House as well as a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

Police, BSF recover drugs worth ₹12 cr in Jammu

JAMMU

Police and BSF said on Thursday that in a joint operation drugs worth Rs 12 crore were recovered from agricultural fields in a village of Jammu district.

Officials said that in a significant achievement on the anti-drug trafficking front, Jammu Police along with 101 battalion of the BSF, achieved a major breakthrough by recovering a huge quantity of high grade narcotics (suspected drone dropping) worth Rs 12 crore, in a joint operation from agricultural fields on the outskirts of Badadurpur village of Police Station Bishnah of District Jammu.

The area is just a few kms from the India-Pakistan International Border. Acting promptly on the inputs generated by JKP regarding a suspicious drone dropped package lying in the agricultural fields, a joint cordon and search operation was launched by Jammu Police and 101 Bn BSF during the evening hours on 11-03-2026 on the outskirts of Bahadurpur village in the Jurisdiction of Police Station Bishnah, area near the International Border. The suspected drone load in the form of a bag with an attached rope and hook with small packets inside containing heroin was recovered from the agricultural fields.

The area is near the International Border and it is suspected to be a drone drop from Pakistan in the Indian Territory. Each packet appeared to contain a heroin-like substance. A recovery memo has also been prepared and the recovered packets contain 2.0 kg heroin-like substance worth Rs 12 crore in the international market.

Oppn uproar over LPG price hike disrupts Odisha Assembly proceedings

BHUBANESWAR

Opposition members from the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and Congress created a ruckus in the Odisha Assembly on Thursday, protesting the recent hike in LPG cylinder prices and the shortage of cooking gas in the state.

As soon as the Question Hour began, members of the Congress party, holding placards, assembled near the podium of Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy and raised anti-government slogans over the LPG price hike.

The BJD MLAs also staged noisy protests during the Question Hour, standing at their seats and raising slogans. The Speaker attempted to continue proceedings amid the uproar but was forced to adjourn the House until 11.30 a.m.

However, opposition members continued to create a ruckus over the LPG price hike issue after the House reconvened, forcing Speaker Padhy to adjourn the House first until 12.10 p.m. and later till 4 p.m.

Speaking to media persons outside the House, senior Congress leader Ashok Das said that the continuous increase in LPG cylinder prices has made it extremely difficult for common people and poor families to manage their daily household expenses. He stated that cooking gas is an essential requirement for every household and that the government must ensure it remains affordable.

The Congress leader said the protest was organised to reflect the voice of the people and to compel the government to take immediate steps to control the rising prices. He urged the government to restore adequate subsidies on LPG cylinders and regulate prices so that ordinary citizens can sustain their livelihoods.

Opposition MPs flag LPG shortage, petrol price concerns

NEW DELHI

Several Opposition MPs on Thursday raised concerns over claims of shortages of LPG cylinders and rising fuel prices, demanding a discussion in Parliament and accusing the government of failing to manage the supply situation. However, leaders from the ruling alliance asserted that there was no reason for panic and assured that adequate reserves were available in the country. Congress MP Shashi Tharoor told that the issue must be discussed in Parliament and the government should explain the situation to the public.

BOOST TO INDIGENOUS PRODUCTS

4 Guj cities to get 'Namo Swadeshi Urban Malls'

AHMEDABAD

On Thursday, the state government revealed that 'Namo Swadeshi Urban Malls' will be set up in Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot under the Gujarat Urban Livelihood Mission (GULM).

The initiative aims to create organised urban marketplaces where locally produced goods can be sold directly to consumers.

The project is being implemented by the Urban Development and Urban Housing Department as part of the state's broader efforts to promote indigenous products and generate sustainable livelihood opportunities in urban areas. According to officials, the malls will provide modern and structured retail spaces where artisans, women associated with self-help groups (SHGs), street vendors and small-scale industries can display and sell their products throughout the year.

Authorities said the initiative is designed to give small producers greater visibility and access to steady retail outlets in cities, helping them connect with urban consumers while encouraging the use of locally-made goods.

The programme builds upon the earlier concept of 'Swadeshi Melas' organised

across various urban centres in Gujarat. These fairs were conducted during the state's Urban Development Year 2025–26 and were held in 16 municipal corporations as part of a plastic-free Swadeshi (indigenous) festival.

The melas provided temporary platforms where artisans, vendors and small traders could showcase their products and attract buyers from cities. The events witnessed strong participation and helped generate interest in locally produced goods.

Officials explained that the newly proposed malls will transform this temporary model into a permanent marketplace. By offering dedicated retail infrastructure, the government hopes to ensure continuous business opportunities for small producers instead of limiting sales to occasional fairs and exhibitions.

The initiative also aligns with national campaigns promoted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that encourage domestic manufacturing and the use of indigenous goods. Programmes such as 'Make in India', 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Har Ghar Swadeshi' have emphasised strengthening local production and supporting small businesses across the country.

Through the Namo Swadeshi Urban Malls, the Gujarat government aims to expand the reach of indigenous products, empower grassroots entrepreneurs and strengthen the state's urban livelihood ecosystem.

2 fuel tankers burst into flames in Iraqi waters

Two oil tankers were set ablaze in Iraqi waters near the port of Basra on Thursday, marking a significant escalation in Iranian attacks

TEHRAN

The attacks occurred overnight near the Iraqi port city of Basra, where images verified by Reuters showed two ships engulfed in massive orange fireballs that illuminated the night sky.

The footage, filmed from the shoreline, captured the dramatic blaze as flames spread across the vessels following the strikes.

Iraqi authorities reported that the tankers were attacked by Iranian boats carrying explosives. According to officials, at least one crew member was killed in the assault, while emergency teams worked to control the fires and assess the damage to the ships.

The incidents represent the latest escalation in a growing maritime conflict that has begun to threaten critical shipping routes and oil transport in the region. Just hours before the Basra attack, three other vessels were targeted in the Gulf.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps claimed responsibility for at least one of those strikes. The group said it had attacked a Thai bulk carrier that was subsequently set on fire after allegedly failing to comply with Iranian orders while sailing in the region.

In another incident, a container ship reported being hit by an unidentified projectile near the United Arab Emirates on Thursday, according to a maritime security authority monitoring shipping activity in the area. Details about the damage or casualties from that attack were not immediately available.

The wave of maritime assaults comes amid an intensifying regional war launched two weeks ago by the United States and Israel against Iran.

Despite ongoing hostilities, U.S. President Donald Trump recently claimed that the conflict had already been effectively won, even as attacks continue to spread across key waterways.

Analysts warn that the escalating strikes on commercial shipping are beginning to disrupt energy markets worldwide. The conflict has already killed around 2,000 people and triggered what experts describe as the most severe disruption to global energy supplies since the oil crises of the 1970s.

With several tankers and cargo vessels now under attack across the Gulf region, concerns are growing among governments and energy companies about the security of critical maritime routes that carry a significant portion of the world's oil exports.

Thailand demands Iran apology after vessel attack in Hormuz

BANGKOK

The incident occurred when the Thai vessel was hit by a projectile while sailing through the strategically important Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical shipping lanes for oil and trade. The impact caused a fire on board, prompting the crew to evacuate the vessel to ensure their safety.

Thailand's Foreign Ministry said it had formally raised the matter with Iran and was seeking clarification regarding the circumstances surrounding the attack. Officials confirmed that they had summoned Iran's ambassador on Thursday to provide an explanation about the incident and the involvement of Iranian forces.

In a statement issued after the attack, the ministry said Thailand expected a clear response and an apology from Iran for the damage caused to the vessel. The government is also assessing the extent of the damage and the safety of the crew members who were forced to abandon the ship.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) later acknowledged the incident in a statement carried. According to the statement, the ship was "fired upon by Iranian fighters," though the Guards did not provide detailed reasons for the action or specify the circumstances that led to the strike.

The Strait of Hormuz, located between Iran and Oman, is a vital maritime corridor through which a significant portion of the world's oil shipments pass each day. Any security incident in the narrow waterway often raises concerns among governments and global shipping companies about the safety of vessels transiting the region.

The attack comes amid escalating tensions in the Middle East following ongoing military confrontations involving Iran, the United States, and Israel. In recent weeks, several commercial vessels have reportedly come under attack in the Gulf and nearby waters, increasing fears about the stability of global energy supplies and maritime trade routes.

Israeli strikes Beirut suburbs after Hezbollah fires rockets

JERUSALEM

Flashes of red explosions lit up Beirut's skyline as Israeli strikes targeted areas in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital, a stronghold of the Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah. The strikes triggered fires in several buildings, with smoke and flames visible across parts of the city.

The attacks came hours after Hezbollah fired dozens of rockets toward northern Israel. The group said the rocket barrage was part of a "series of operations," signaling that more attacks could follow. Lebanese security sources told Reuters that more than 100 rockets were launched during the assault.

The renewed violence reflects the growing regional fallout from the war involving Israel, the United States, and Iran. Israel launched its offensive against Hezbollah after the group opened fire on March 2, claiming it was retaliating for the killing of Iran's supreme leader during the early stages of the U.S.-Israeli military campaign against Iran.

According to Lebanese authorities, Israeli strikes since the beginning of the conflict have killed more than 600 people in Lebanon and displaced around 800,000 residents. Many families have fled their homes in southern Lebanon and the outskirts of Beirut as air raids and cross-border attacks intensify.

Israeli officials say Hezbollah's actions are being closely coordinated with Tehran. A senior Israeli defence official stated that Iran and Hezbollah had carried out a joint missile attack on Israel, describing it as the first coordinated strike against the country since the broader war began.

The escalating exchange of fire has raised concerns about a wider regional conflict, with both sides continuing to intensify military operations. In the early hours of Thursday, Lebanon's health ministry reported that at least eight people were killed in an Israeli airstrike on the Ramlet al-Baida seafront area of Beirut. Emergency crews rushed to the scene to search for survivors and evacuate the wounded.

With Hezbollah promising additional operations and Israel continuing its air campaign, tensions remain extremely high along the Israel-Lebanon front, fueling fears of further escalation in an already volatile Middle East conflict.

Up to 3.2 million people displaced inside Iran since conflict began: UNHCR

GENEVA

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the ongoing fighting has forced millions of Iranians to flee their homes, creating one of the largest displacement crises in the region in recent years.

The agency said the estimate of 3.2 million internally displaced people is based on preliminary assessments of households that have been uprooted since the conflict began.

In a statement released on Thursday, UNHCR warned that the number of displaced people could rise significantly if the fighting persists. "This figure is likely to continue rising as hostilities persist, marking a worrying escalation in humanitarian needs," the agency said.

The conflict, which erupted on February 28, has triggered widespread instability across several parts of Iran, forcing families to abandon their homes in search of safer areas. Many displaced people are reportedly taking shelter with relatives, in temporary accommodations, or in overcrowded public facilities. Humanitarian organizations have raised concerns about the growing needs of those displaced, including access to food, clean water, healthcare, and shelter.

Beijing-Pyongyang passenger train service resumes after 6 years

BEIJING

Train K27 left Beijing on Thursday and is scheduled to arrive in Pyongyang at 6:07 p.m. on Friday after a journey lasting approximately 24 hours and 41 minutes. The route travels north of the Bohai Sea and includes a stop in Dandong, the Chinese border city that serves as a key gateway for trade and transportation between the two nations. The service had been suspended for six years, largely due to pandemic-related restrictions and broader limitations on cross-border travel. Its resumption reflects growing efforts by China to restore connectivity and rebuild infrastructure links with North Korea. China's railway authority confirmed the schedule and route details for the train, highlighting its role in facilitating travel and exchanges between the two countries.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

	9	8		2	4		7	1
7			9			5		
	4			6	7		9	2
2		4		7		9	5	
	8		6		9		2	
9		5		4		1		
	7		2		5		1	4
4		3		8		2		
8		2	4		6		3	5

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

7	6	8	4	3	5	2	1	9
5	2	4	8	9	1	3	6	7
3	1	9	6	7	2	8	4	5
9	4	7	3	1	8	5	2	6
1	3	6	2	5	7	9	8	4
8	5	2	9	6	4	7	3	1
4	8	1	5	2	9	6	7	3
6	7	5	1	8	3	4	9	2
2	9	3	7	4	6	1	5	8

China steps in to ease Pak-Afghan border tensions

BEIJING

According to three Pakistani government officials, China played a key role in calming tensions between the two neighboring countries after weeks of escalating violence along their shared border. The mediation efforts reportedly included a message from Chinese President Xi Jinping urging both sides to de-escalate hostilities. The message was conveyed during a meeting late last month between Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Officials said the communication emphasized the need for restraint and encouraged both countries to avoid further escalation of military action along the border.

The border between Pakistan and Afghanistan stretches roughly 2,600 kilometers (1,600 miles) and has long been a flashpoint for tensions. However, officials noted that in recent days the situation has shown signs of improvement. There have been no reports of Pakistani air strikes inside Afghanistan, and large-scale ground clashes along the frontier appear to have subsided.

Despite the relative calm, sporadic skirmishes and daily incidents are still being reported along certain sections of the border. Security forces from both sides remain on alert, indicating that the situation remains fragile. China has publicly stated that it is maintaining communication with both Islamabad and the Taliban-led government in Kabul in an effort to encourage dialogue and prevent further conflict.

Beijing has increasingly positioned itself as a regional mediator, particularly in South and Central Asia, where stability is seen as vital for trade and security. However, Mosharraf Zaidi, a spokesman for Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, did not respond to questions regarding the specifics of Beijing's mediation efforts.

China passes law promoting 'Shared National Identity' among ethnic groups

BEIJING

The legislation, titled "Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress," was approved during the closing session of the annual meeting of the National People's Congress, China's top legislative body.

According to witnesses cited by Reuters, the law passed with overwhelming support, receiving 2,756 votes in favor, three against, and three abstentions.

A draft version of the law indicates that its primary objective is to strengthen national unity and advance what authorities describe as the "rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) playing a central role. The legislation is scheduled to come into force on July 1, according to Chinese state media reports.

Chinese officials say the law is intended to promote solidarity among the country's diverse ethnic communities and reinforce a unified national identity. However, critics argue that the policy may increase pressure on minority groups to assimilate into the dominant Han Chinese culture.Some analysts also warn that the legislation could make it easier for authorities to label dissenting views or expressions of ethnic identity as separatism, potentially exposing individuals or groups to legal consequences under China's strict national security framework. China officially recognizes 56 ethnic groups within its population of roughly 1.4 billion people.

RAIN FURY

Landslide in Southern Ethiopia kills 52, dozens missing

NAIROBI

The deadly landslide occurred in the Gamo Zone in southern Ethiopia after intense rains triggered the collapse of large sections of earth, burying homes and trapping residents under debris. Authorities said rescue teams are continuing search operations in the affected area as fears grow that the death toll could rise.

According to a statement released by the Gamo Zone communications office on its official Facebook page, the disaster has already claimed dozens of lives. "It has been confirmed that 52 people have lost their lives, and efforts are continuing intensively to locate 50 people whose whereabouts are unknown," the statement said.

Emergency responders, local authorities, and volunteers have been working around the clock to locate survivors and recover bodies from the rubble. However, ongoing rain and unstable ground conditions are complicating rescue efforts and increasing the risk of further landslides in the region.

Officials said several houses were buried when the landslide struck, trapping families inside. The full extent of the damage is still being assessed, and authorities are continuing to gather information from affected communities.

Southern Ethiopia is particularly vulnerable to landslides during periods of heavy rainfall due to its mountainous terrain and unstable soil conditions. Seasonal rains often cause flooding, landslides, and other natural disasters that threaten rural communities.

Local authorities have urged residents in nearby areas to remain cautious and avoid unstable slopes as search and rescue teams continue operations. They are also coordinating with disaster response agencies to provide emergency assistance to families affected by the tragedy.

Community members have joined rescue workers in digging through mud and debris in hopes of finding survivors. However, with dozens still unaccounted for, officials fear the casualty figure could increase as the search progresses. The landslide highlights the growing challenges faced by vulnerable communities in Ethiopia during heavy rainy seasons, where natural disasters can quickly turn deadly and strain local emergency response systems.

Stranded Proteas, Windies players finally leave India amid West Asia crisis

Final groups depart Kolkata after airspace closures disrupt post-tournament travel plans

KOLKATA

The final batch of players and staff from South Africa national cricket team and West Indies cricket team departed India on Thursday after days of uncertainty caused by the escalating conflict in West Asia, the International Cricket Council (ICC) confirmed.

The crisis had severely disrupted international travel after airspace and major transit hubs, particularly Dubai, were shut indefinitely, forcing several players and officials to remain in India longer than planned following their participation in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup.

Both teams had completed their final matches in Kolkata earlier this month — the West Indies on March 1 and South Africa on March 4 — but were unable to leave due to the sudden aviation disruptions linked to the conflict.

According to the ICC, the remaining 29 members of the South African contingent and the final 16 members of the West Indies squad, including support staff, boarded commercial flights within the past 24 hours to return to their respective countries.

"Within the past 24 hours, South Africa's remaining 29 members and the West Indies' final 16 members have departed on flights to their respective homelands, bringing to a close a complex operation carried out under exceptionally challenging global travel conditions," the ICC said in a statement.

The governing body said ensuring the safe travel of players and staff had been its top priority. ICC operations and logistics teams worked with governments, airlines, airport authorities and member boards to arrange alternative routes and flights as the situation evolved.

"Throughout this period, the ICC's operations and logistics teams have worked continuously with governments, airlines, charter providers and airport authorities to manage operational disruptions caused by the evolving environment," it added.

The situation, however, drew criticism from several prominent figures in international cricket. Former England national cricket team captain Michael Vaughan and South African players Quinton de Kock and David Miller questioned the travel arrangements, alleging that England players were given quicker exit options despite leaving the tournament later.

Earlier, West Indies head coach Darren Sammy had also expressed frustration after a planned charter flight from Kolkata was cancelled due to logistical issues. The ICC's airline partner Emirates had suspended operations following the shutdown of airspace over Dubai, further complicating evacuation plans. With the final departures now completed, the ICC said the challenging relocation effort had successfully concluded.

Shubman Gill set to receive BCCI CRICKETER OF THE YEAR HONOUR

NEW DELHI

India's Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill is set to be named the Cricketer of the Year at the annual awards ceremony organised by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), scheduled to be held in New Delhi on March 15.

The 26-year-old batter, who was not part of India's squad that successfully defended the ICC Men's T20 World Cup title last month, delivered a remarkable run of performances in the longer formats of the game over the past year.

Gill enjoyed an outstanding Test season, amassing 983 runs at an average exceeding 70. A significant portion of those runs came during India's hard-fought away series against the England national cricket team in 2025, where he scored a remarkable 754 runs in a closely contested series that ended in a draw.

In the One-Day International format, Gill also played a key role in India's success, scoring 490 runs during the year. His contributions included a vital 188 runs in India's triumphant campaign at the ICC Champions Trophy, helping the team secure another major international title.

Across formats, Gill accumulated an impressive total of 1,764 runs, averaging nearly 49. His tally included seven centuries and three half-centuries, underlining his growing stature as one of the leading batters in world cricket.

Although his form in T20 Internationals was relatively modest, Gill displayed exceptional consistency in franchise cricket. Representing the Gujarat Titans in the Indian Premier League, he scored 650 runs at an average of 50, finishing among the tournament's top performers.

The annual BCCI awards ceremony will also recognise other major contributors to Indian cricket. Former India head coach Rahul Dravid is set to receive the prestigious Col. C. K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award for his immense contribution to the game, including guiding India to victory in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024.

Meanwhile, the Mumbai Cricket Association is expected to be honoured as the Best Association in domestic cricket for its consistent performance and contribution to the sport's development.

India captain rewarded after prolific performances across Test and ODI formats

Former chief selector recalls difficult decisions involving Gambhir, Tendulkar and senior players

Gambhir stopped speaking after axing, Tendulkar shocked: Sandeep Patil

NEW DELHI

Former India chief selector Sandeep Patil has revealed that former opener Gautam Gambhir has not spoken to him since being dropped from the national side, while also recalling that cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar was taken aback when selectors asked him about his future plans.

Patil, who served as chairman of selectors for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) between 2012 and 2016, spoke candidly about some of the difficult decisions taken during his tenure while appearing on a recent talk show.

According to Patil, Gambhir never came to terms with being dropped from the Indian team and has remained distant ever since. The left-handed opener played his final international match for the India national cricket team in November 2016.

"Gambhir is still upset. He has never spoken to me. We've come together on many shows and sat in the same room, but he has never even looked at me," Patil said. "Every time I tried to greet him, he didn't respond. Not even a glance."

Despite the strained relationship, Patil said he continues to respect the former opener, who is currently serving as head coach of the national team.

Patil also compared Gambhir's reaction with those of other senior players who were dropped during the same period. He said legends such as V. V. S. Laxman, Rahul Dravid and Sourav Ganguly handled their exclusions with greater acceptance and moved on quietly.

Speaking about Tendulkar, Patil recalled a meeting where the selection panel sought clarity about the batting great's future. The question left the iconic cricketer visibly surprised.

"When we sat down with him, I asked one question — 'What are your plans?' He immediately asked why," Patil said. "I told him the committee was looking at future replacements. He was shocked and later called me again to ask if we were serious."

Patil clarified that the selectors never asked Tendulkar to retire nor formally dropped him from the side, emphasising that such decisions ultimately rest with the player.

RCB to face SRH in IPL 2026 opener on March 28 in Bengaluru

BENGALURU

Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru will host Sunrisers Hyderabad in the opening match of the 2026 Indian Premier League (IPL) season at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on March 28, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced.

The cricket board released the schedule for the first phase of the tournament, which will run until April 12. The complete fixture list will be announced later after polling dates for upcoming state assembly elections are declared by the Election Commission of India.

According to the BCCI, elections are expected in several states during the same period, prompting the board to release the initial schedule in phases to avoid logistical clashes with security arrangements required for the polls.

The opening clash will mark the return of IPL action to Bengaluru following Royal Challengers Bengaluru's historic title triumph last season. RCB ended an 18-year wait for the trophy by defeating Punjab Kings in the 2025 final.

Under the leadership of Rajat Patidar, RCB will play four matches during the first phase of the tournament. Their first two matches will be home games at the Chinnaswamy Stadium — against Sunrisers Hyderabad on March 28 and arch-rivals Chennai Super Kings on April 5.

The Bengaluru franchise will then travel to face Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur on April 10 before taking on Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on April 12.

The BCCI also confirmed that RCB will play five of their seven home matches in Bengaluru, while the remaining two will be staged at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium in Raipur.

However, matches in Bengaluru will be subject to clearance from an expert committee formed by the Government of Karnataka to assess stadium safety and match-day arrangements. The committee is scheduled to inspect the Chinnaswamy Stadium on March 13 and conduct a mock demonstration of match-day operations.

A total of 20 matches will be played across 10 venues during the first phase, including Bengaluru, Mumbai, Guwahati, New Chandigarh, Lucknow, Kolkata, Chennai, Delhi, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad.

The first phase will also feature four double-headers, with afternoon matches beginning at 3:30 pm and evening fixtures starting at 7:30 pm.

IPL 2026 to proceed as scheduled, full fixture list after poll dates: Shukla

NEW DELHI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has confirmed that the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 season will be held as planned, with the remaining schedule to be announced once dates for upcoming state assembly elections are declared. BCCI vice-president Rajiv Shukla said the board decided to release only the first part of the tournament calendar because the Election Commission of India is yet to announce polling dates for assembly elections scheduled in several states during April and May. The cricket board on Wednesday unveiled the schedule for the first 20 matches of the upcoming season, providing clarity on the tournament's start while leaving the rest of the fixtures to be finalised after the election timetable is confirmed.

Shukla assured that the league will proceed without disruption despite the scheduling adjustments. "Once the Election Commission announces the dates for the assembly polls, we will release the complete IPL schedule," Shukla said, adding that the tournament would go ahead according to its planned timeline.

The opening match of IPL 2026 will see defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru host Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru on March 28.

COMPLAINT FILED AGAINST HARDIK PANDYA OVER ALLEGED DISRESPECT TO NATIONAL FLAG

AHMEDABAD

India all-rounder Hardik Pandya has landed in legal trouble after a complaint was filed accusing him of disrespecting the national flag during celebrations following India's victory in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup final.

A Pune-based lawyer, Wajid Khan, lodged a complaint at the Shivaji Nagar Police Station alleging that Pandya violated provisions related to the dignity of the national flag during post-match celebrations at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

According to the complaint, Pandya draped the Indian tricolour around himself while celebrating with his girlfriend, Mahieka Sharma, after India defeated the New Zealand national cricket team in the final on Sunday.

Khan alleged that the cricketer's actions violated the provisions of the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971, which mandates that the national flag must be treated with respect and dignity.

"You must have seen the T20 World Cup here. Hardik Pandya was dancing with his girlfriend in celebration of his victory. The national flag was tied to his back," Khan told reporters. "According to the 1971 Act, the dignity of the national flag must be maintained. However, he appeared lost in the celebrations while wearing the flag."

Khan said the police initially pointed out that the alleged incident took place in Ahmedabad, but he insisted that the complaint could still be filed in Pune as the national flag represents the entire country.

"They have accepted my complaint and provided me with a copy. Now we will see what happens next," he said.

Videos circulating widely on social media show Pandya celebrating enthusiastically with Sharma following India's emphatic win over New Zealand.

Iran says it will not participate in 2026 FIFA World Cup amid escalating conflict

TEHRAN

Iran will not take part in the 2026 FIFA World Cup 2026 following recent military strikes involving the United States and Israel, Iranian Sports Minister Ahmad Donyamali said, citing security concerns and political tensions.

The 48-team tournament is scheduled to be hosted jointly by the United States, Canada and Mexico from June 11 to July 19, 2026.

Donyamali said Iran could not consider participating in a tournament partly hosted by the United States following the recent escalation in the region.

"Considering that this corrupt regime has assassinated our leader, under no circumstances can we participate in the World Cup," he said, referring to the death of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in airstrikes that have triggered a wider regional conflict. "Our children are not safe and fundamentally such conditions for participation do not exist," the minister added, accusing the United States and Israel of forcing war on the country and causing large-scale casualties.

According to Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, Amir Saeid Iravani, more than 1,300 Iranian civilians have been killed since airstrikes began on February 28.

Iran had comfortably qualified for the World Cup after dominating the Asian qualifying rounds last year and had been drawn in Group G alongside Belgium, Egypt and New Zealand.

All three of Iran's group-stage matches were scheduled to be played in the United States, with two fixtures planned in Los Angeles and one in Seattle.

Iran was notably absent from a recent World Cup planning summit for participating teams held in Atlanta, raising early speculation about its involvement in the tournament. World football's governing body, FIFA, has not yet issued an official response. Under FIFA regulations, any team that withdraws less than 30 days before its first match can face a fine of at least 250,000 Swiss francs and other disciplinary sanctions, including potential exclusion from future competitions.

Earlier, FIFA president Gianni Infantino said he had spoken with U.S. President Donald Trump, who indicated that Iran would still be welcome to participate in the tournament.

QUICK READ

IndiGo parent shares fall nearly 4 pc after Citi cuts target price

Mumbai

Shares of InterGlobe Aviation Limited, the parent company of IndiGo airline, fell sharply on Thursday, after global brokerage firm Citi lowered its price target for the stock. The brokerage cut its target price by about 10.5 per cent to Rs 5,100 per share from the earlier Rs 5,700. Despite the reduction, Citi maintained its buy rating on the stock. The revised target still suggests a potential upside of around 17 per cent from the stock's previous closing price. According to Citi, IndiGo has faced several negative developments over the past year that have affected its operations and outlook. The brokerage noted that the airline's performance was first impacted by an adverse geopolitical environment in the first quarter.

Air India seeks DGCA nod to relax flight duty norms amid Gulf tensions

New Delhi

Air India has approached the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) seeking temporary relaxation in Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms as escalating tensions in the Middle East force airlines to take longer diversionary routes, a report said on Thursday. The Tata Group-owned airline has requested permission to operate certain long-haul flights with a two-pilot crew instead of the standard three, along with an extension in maximum flying time, according to NDTV Profit. According to sources cited by the NDTV Profit, the airline firm has sought a one-hour and three-minute increase in permissible flying time, which would raise the limit from 10 hours to about 11–11.5 hours.

IRAN WAR

No fuel shortage in India, supply chains stable: Puri

Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri assured Parliament that India currently faces no shortage of fuel and has adequate crude oil supplies to meet domestic demand.

NEW DELHI

Addressing Parliament, Puri emphasised that India's crude oil supply position remains secure despite concerns arising from disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz due to the ongoing regional conflict.

He stated that the volume of crude oil secured by the country currently exceeds what India would have received through the Strait of Hormuz during the same period.

The minister credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for strengthening India's global energy partnerships through diplomatic outreach. According to Puri, the government's proactive diplomacy has enabled India to secure crude oil supplies from multiple sources, ensuring the country remains insulated from potential disruptions in key shipping routes.

He explained that India has significantly diversified its crude import sources in recent years, reducing dependence on West Asia. At present, the country imports crude oil from around 40 different nations, which helps maintain stability in fuel availability even during periods of geopolitical uncertainty.

Puri also reassured citizens that domestic supplies of compressed natural gas (CNG) and piped natural gas (PNG) remain stable. The government has taken steps to ensure that households and consumers across the country continue to receive uninterrupted energy supplies.

There is no shortage for domestic consumers, and there is no reason to panic, the minister said, reiterating that the government is fully prepared to manage the country's energy needs.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs stated earlier that India is closely monitoring developments in West Asia and is actively working to assist Indian nationals in Iran. The ministry also said that the government is addressing concerns related to the safety of shipping routes and the country's energy security amid the ongoing conflict in the region.

Officials said the government remains committed to ensuring an uninterrupted and affordable supply of energy for Indian households and industries, while continuing to strengthen alternative supply chains and strategic reserves to safeguard the country's long-term energy security.

India assisting nationals in Iran, monitoring shipping movements: MEA

NEW DELHI

Providing details during a weekly media briefing in New Delhi, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the government has been extending support to Indian nationals in Iran and helping those who wish to return home. According to the ministry, several Indian citizens have already returned to India following advisories issued earlier.

Jaiswal said there are around 9,000 Indian nationals currently in Iran, including students, seafarers, businesspersons, professionals and pilgrims residing in Tehran, to safer locations within Iran as a precautionary measure. The Indian mission in Tehran remains in constant contact with the community and continues to provide assistance to those in need.

We have around 9,000 Indian nationals in Iran, including students, seafarers, businesspeople, professionals and pilgrims. Following advisories issued earlier, several Indian nationals, especially students, have already returned home, Jaiswal said.

The government is also facilitating the evacuation of citizens who wish to leave Iran through neighbouring countries. According to the MEA, Indian nationals are being assisted in travelling to Azerbaijan and Armenia via land borders, from where they can board commercial flights back to India. The ministry is helping them with visa arrangements and border-crossing procedures.

Jaiswal urged Indian nationals planning to leave Iran through land routes to strictly follow the advisory issued by the Indian Embassy in Tehran on March 9.

Meanwhile, the MEA also addressed concerns regarding the safety of vessels passing through the strategically important Strait of Hormuz. Jaiswal said S. Jaishankar has held multiple conversations in recent days with Seyed Abbas Araghchi regarding developments in the region.

The External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Minister of Iran have had three conversations in recent days. In the last one, they discussed issues pertaining to the safety of shipping and India's energy security, he said.

Earlier this week, Jaishankar also held a detailed telephone conversation with Araghchi to discuss the evolving situation in West Asia and its implications. In a post on social media platform X, the External Affairs Minister said the discussions focused on recent developments and the importance of maintaining stability in the region.

The Indian government continues to monitor the situation closely while ensuring the safety of its citizens abroad and safeguarding the country's energy and maritime interests.

India has over 11K airline pilots, nearly 1,900 women: Govt

NEW DELHI

In a written response to a question in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol said that Indian airlines collectively employ 11,394 pilots, of whom 1,871 are women.

Among domestic carriers, IndiGo has the highest number of pilots. The airline employs a total of 5,200 pilots, including 970 women, making it the largest employer of pilots in the country.

Air India ranks second with 3,123 pilots on its rolls, including 508 female pilots, according to the data presented by the minister.

Other carriers also employ a significant number of pilots. Air India Express has 1,820 pilots, including 234 women, while Akasa Air employs 761 pilots, of whom 76 are women.

Meanwhile, SpiceJet has 375 pilots, including 58 female pilots, and Alliance Air employs 115 pilots, of whom 25 are women.

The government also shared details regarding foreign pilots working with Indian carriers. According to the data, Alliance Air employs 15 foreign pilots, Air India Express has hired 48 foreign pilots, while IndiGo has 29 foreign pilots currently working with the airline.

The pilot-to-aircraft ratio varies across airlines. SpiceJet has the highest ratio with 9.4 pilots per aircraft, followed by Akasa Air at 9.33 and Air India at 9.1 pilots per aircraft.

Air India Express has a pilot-to-aircraft ratio of 8.8, while IndiGo's ratio stands at 7.6 pilots per aircraft. Alliance Air has the lowest ratio among the major airlines with six pilots per aircraft.

The government said the figures provide an overview of the current pilot workforce across major Indian airlines and reflect the distribution of aviation professionals within the country's rapidly expanding civil aviation sector.

'The system enhances safety by identifying potential faults in rolling stock before they lead to operational disruptions or accidents'

Indian Railways deploys AI, drone monitoring to boost safety, efficiency

NEW DELHI

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said technological upgrades in the national transporter are a continuous process, with multiple modern monitoring systems already deployed or being tested on a pilot basis.

He highlighted a range of technology-driven systems introduced across the railway network, including the Machine Vision Inspection System (MVIS), Wheel Impact Load Detector (WILD), Online Monitoring of Rolling Stock (OMRS), Integrated Track Monitoring Systems (ITMS), and systems related to Overhead Equipment (OHE).

According to the minister, the Machine Vision Inspection System is an artificial intelligence and machine learning-based solution designed to detect hanging, loose or missing components in moving trains. The system enhances safety by identifying potential faults in rolling stock before they lead to operational disruptions or accidents.

Vaishnaw informed the House that three MVIS units have been installed in the Northeast Frontier Railway, two units in the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited, and one unit in the South East Central Railway on a pilot basis for freight rolling stock.

He added that Indian Railways has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL) to install four additional MVIS units across the network to monitor freight rolling stock more effectively.

The minister further said that the Research Designs and Standards Organisation is working with industry partners to develop and enhance MVIS technology for broader application in rolling stock monitoring.

Another important technology being used is the Wheel Impact Load Detector (WILD), which identifies defective wheels by measuring the impact created when wheels pass over the track. According to the minister, a total of 24 such systems have already been installed across the railway network.

Similarly, the Online Monitoring of Rolling Stock system continuously monitors the condition of bearings and wheels to detect faults at an early stage. So far, 25 OMRS systems have been deployed, including one installed at Sirpur Kaghaznagar in the Secunderabad Division of the South Central Railway.

Vaishnaw said the deployment of these technologies reflects Indian Railways' ongoing efforts to modernise operations, enhance passenger and freight safety, and improve the reliability of one of the world's largest rail networks.

Govt to give Rs 30K cr to oil PSUs as LPG subsidy in 2025-26

NEW DELHI

The Government has approved a compensation of Rs 30,000 crore in FY 2025-26 to the public sector oil companies -- Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum, and Hindustan Petroleum -- for supplying LPG at subsidised prices, the Parliament was informed on Thursday.

The retail selling price of a 14.2 Kg domestic LPG cylinder is currently Rs 913 in Delhi.

After a targeted subsidy of Rs 300 a cylinder to poor consumers under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), the Centre is providing 14.2 Kg LPG cylinders to them at an effective price of Rs 613 per cylinder (in Delhi), Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Suresh Gopi said in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha.

To augment domestic LPG availability, the Ministry has directed all domestic oil refineries and petrochemical complexes to channel C3 and C4 streams towards LPG production and supply the same exclusively to public sector oil companies. These orders have been issued under the Essential Commodities Act, the minister said.

Gopi also said that the government, through a Special Purpose Vehicle called Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Limited (ISPRL), has established strategic petroleum reserves facilities with a total capacity of 5.33 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) of crude oil, which will help to tide over the disruption in supply chains due to the Iran war.

The minister further stated that the prices of petrol and diesel in the country are market-determined and the public sector oil marketing companies take appropriate decisions on the prices of these fuels.

Domestic oil firms likely to absorb crude up to $90 despite Mideast tensions

NEW DELHI

Indian oil marketing companies (OMCs) should be able to absorb average crude prices of up to around $90 per barrel over the medium term, supported in part by stronger refining margins, even as escalating tensions in West Asia raise concerns over global energy supply routes, a report said on Thursday.

According to an analysis by CareEdge Ratings, the geopolitical situation notes that hostilities around the Strait of Hormuz have led to a sharp rise in crude prices since late February, briefly pushing benchmark Brent crude above the $100 per barrel mark before moderating.

The strait remains a critical chokepoint for global energy flows, accounting for roughly 20 per cent of the world's oil and LNG supply, with about 20.8 million barrels per day of oil and petroleum products passing through the route.

For India, the disruption highlights a longstanding vulnerability in energy logistics, as around 40 per cent of its crude oil imports transit through the Strait of Hormuz, the report said.

However, the report also suggested that the risks are partly cushioned by India's increasingly diversified sourcing strategy.

While West Asian countries still account for roughly half of India's petroleum crude and product imports, the country has expanded purchases from suppliers such as the United States and Russia over the past five years.

India currently imports about 5.5–6 million barrels of crude oil per day, and analysts estimate that a $10 increase in crude prices could raise the country's import bill by roughly $20 billion, according to CareEdge Ratings.

RAISNG THE SCALE

7.83 cr MSMEs register on Udyam create 34.50 cr jobs: Min

NEW DELHI

About 7.83 crore Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have registered on the Udyam Registration portal since 2020, while 1.37 lakh MSMEs have shut down in the same period, constituting just 0.17% of MSMEs which have been closed, the Parliament was informed on Thursday.

As recorded by 7.83 crore MSMEs registered on Udyam Registration Portal, total employment (as on February 28, 2026) is 34.50 crore, Union MSME Minister Jitin Ram Manjhi replied to a question in Lok Sabha.

There are various reasons for an enterprise to deregister such as change in the company owner, certificate not required, duplicate registration, shut down of enterprise and other, the minister informed.

Government supplements the efforts of the State/UT governments through various schemes, programmes and policy initiatives for development and promotion of MSMEs, such as Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme, Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises, Micro and Small Enterprises-Cluster Development Programme, Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance, SRI Fund, PM Vishwakarma and MSME Champions Scheme, etc, Manjhi explained.

To provide the credit, Rs 5 lakh crore Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), for businesses, including MSMEs was announced during COVID-19 pandemic.

The scheme was operational till 31.03.2023, wherein 1.13 crore guarantee were extended to MSMEs, said the minister.

As per a research report dated 23.01.2023 of the State Bank of India on ECLGS, almost 14.6 lakh MSME accounts, of which about 98.3 per cent of the accounts were in the Micro and Small Enterprises categories, were saved.

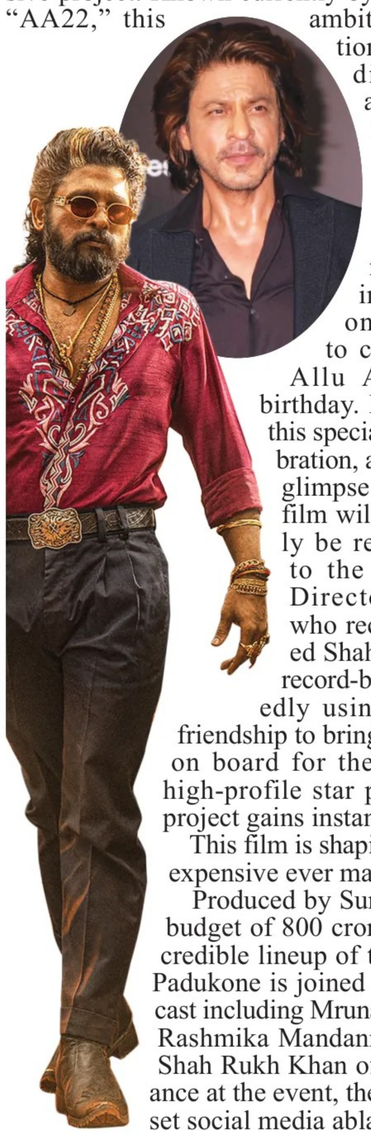
Also, non-tax benefits extended for 3 years in case of an upward change in status of MSMEs. Notably, Rs 50,000 crore equity infusion through Self Reliant India (SRI) Fund, which has a provision of Rs 10,000 crore from Government of India and Rs 40,000 crore through Private Equity/Venture Capital funds. This scheme is aimed at providing growth capital to the deserving and eligible units of MSME sector.

KEY POINTS

- 7.83 crore MSMEs registered
- 34.50 crore jobs created
- Only 0.17% MSMEs shut down
- Key schemes like PMEGP & ECLGS highlighted
- 39% of PMEGP beneficiaries are women

Shah Rukh Khan to launch Allu Arjun's film

Excitement is reaching a fever pitch across the Indian film industry as two of cinema's biggest icons may soon share the same stage. Reports suggest that Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan has been invited to help unveil the first look of Allu Arjun's next massive project. Known currently by the working title "AA22," this ambitious science-fiction movie is being directed by the acclaimed filmmaker Atlee Kumar.



The production team is planning a major event in Mumbai on April 8 to celebrate Allu Arjun's birthday. During this special celebration, a video glimpse of the film will finally be revealed to the public. Director Atlee, who recently directed Shah Rukh Khan in the record-breaking hit Jawan, is reportedly using his close professional friendship to bring the "King of Bollywood" on board for the launch. Having such a high-profile star present would ensure the project gains instant nationwide attention.

This film is shaping up to be one of the most expensive ever made in India.

Produced by Sun Pictures with a staggering budget of 800 crore, the movie features an incredible lineup of talent. Leading lady Deepika Padukone is joined by a star-studded supporting cast including Mrunal Thakur, Janhvi Kapoor, and Rashmika Mandanna. While fans wait to see if Shah Rukh Khan officially confirms his appearance at the event, the mere possibility has already set social media ablaze.

Hansika Motwani and Sohael Khaturiya officially get divorced

Popular actress Hansika Motwani and businessman Sohael Khaturiya have officially ended their marriage. A family court in Bandra, Mumbai, granted the couple a legal divorce this week, bringing a quiet close to a relationship that once captured national headlines. The pair, who tied the knot in a spectacular ceremony in December 2022, had been the subject of intense social media speculation for several months before this final court ruling.

According to legal representatives, the separation was finalized through mutual consent. In a notable move, Hansika reportedly chose to waive all claims to alimony or financial settlements, seeking instead a dignified and peaceful exit from the union. Sources close to the actress mentioned that she preferred to focus on her professional commitments and personal peace rather than engaging in a lengthy legal battle over assets.

During the court proceedings, it was revealed that the couple had been living separately since July 2024. Their lawyer, Adnan Shaikh, explained that the two realized early on that they faced fundamental differences in their temperaments and daily lifestyles. Despite sincere efforts from family members and close friends to help the couple reconcile, the disagreements persisted. Eventually, both Hansika and Sohael agreed that a permanent separation was the most healthy path forward for their individual futures. The couple, who did not have any children, had previously documented their wedding journey in a reality series. Now, they move forward separately, asking for privacy as they begin this new chapter of their lives.

Kate Winslet eyes role in Middle-Earth film

Oscar-winning actor Kate Winslet is in talks to join the upcoming fantasy epic The Lord of the Rings: The Hunt for Gollum, directed by Andy Serkis. The film, set to begin production in New Zealand later this year, takes place in the timeline between The Hobbit trilogy and the original Lord of the Rings films. While details of Winslet's role remain under wraps, the project promises to explore the adventures of Aragorn and Gandalf as they search for Gollum and uncover information about Bilbo Baggins' ring, later revealed as the powerful One Ring threatening all of Middle-earth.

Serkis, who famously portrayed Gollum in Peter Jackson's original trilogy, will reprise the role while also directing. The film reunites key creative figures from the original series, including producers Peter Jackson, Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens, and Zane Weiner. Veteran actors like Ian McKellen are expected to return as Gandalf, with hints that Elijah Wood may reprise Frodo Baggins. Winslet recently appeared as Ronal in James Cameron's blockbuster Avatar: Fire and Ash, which grossed over USD 1.5 billion worldwide. She also directed last year's family drama Goodbye June, written by her son Joe Anders.

Priyanka Mohan shares Korea shoot struggles

Actress Priyanka Mohan recently shared her experience filming the international project Made in Korea, which kept her in Korea for more than 40 days. She described the shoot as both challenging and rewarding. One of the biggest difficulties was adjusting to the food. Priyanka, who is mostly vegetarian and recently started eating chicken, said Korean cuisine often includes red meat, making it hard for her to find suitable meals. The unpredictable weather also created challenges during filming. She recalled that the day could start sunny, turn rainy in the afternoon, and even snow by night, sometimes disrupting the schedule.

Despite these hurdles, Priyanka had a positive experience working with the Korean cast and crew. She praised their professionalism, dedication to rehearsals, and friendly nature. Priyanka said she grew very close to the team and even felt emotional after returning home. Directed by Ra Karthik, Made in Korea follows Shenba's journey of chasing dreams in a new culture.

Kumbh Mela star Monalisa marries Kerala love

Monalisa Bhosle, who became an internet sensation during Kumbh Mela 2025 for her striking blue-brown eyes, tied the knot with her boyfriend Furman Khan on Wednesday at the Nayanar Temple in Arumanoor near Poovar, Kerala. The wedding ceremony took place at the Gurumandiram just outside the temple premises and was attended by hundreds, including Kerala Minister V Sivankutty, M V Govindan, and CPI(M) district secretary AA Rahim.

The couple shared details of their love story with the media. They met during a film shoot and dated for six months before deciding to marry. "These six months were like sixty years of love," said Furman. Monalisa added that she had initially proposed to him, and although he hesitated, she convinced him.

The bride also revealed that her family had opposed the marriage, preferring she marry someone else. "I didn't like that and refused. Now, after marrying Furman, I am happy," she said.

Monalisa rose to fame in 2025 while selling Rudraksh and Mala beads in Prayagraj during the Maha Kumbh Mela. Her unique eyes made her a viral sensation, and social media users widely celebrated her photos.

The wedding combined traditional Kerala rituals with a personal touch, reflecting the couple's admiration for the Nayanar Temple. With media and fans celebrating the union, Monalisa and Furman's love story continues to captivate hearts across India.

Chinmayi Sripaada shares special bond with Rashmika

Renowned playback singer Chinmayi Sripaada has opened up about her surprisingly deep personal connection with actress Rashmika Mandanna. While the two have collaborated professionally on several musical hits, including songs from Geetha Govindam and Dear Comrade, their relationship has evolved into something far more familial. During a recent interview with The Cue Studio, Chinmayi expressed immense pride in the actress, describing her as one of the finest performers in the country and a genuinely dedicated worker.

The bond between the two stars strengthened significantly during the production of the upcoming film The Girlfriend. This project is directed by Rahul Ravindran, who is Chinmayi's husband. Because of their close working relationship and the guidance Rahul provided on set, a unique family dynamic emerged. Chinmayi joked that although their age difference is not actually that large, Rahul has become a father figure to Rashmika. Consequently, the singer now considers herself a "mother of sorts" to the talented star, calling her a sweet child. In addition to praising her professional growth, Chinmayi took a moment to offer her warmest blessings to the actress. She specifically wished Rashmika and actor Vijay Deverakonda the very best of luck following their recent marriage. While Chinmayi has famously provided the dubbing voice for many top actresses like Samantha Ruth Prabhu and Mrunal Thakur, she has not yet voiced a character for Rashmika.

ACTORS DEMAND APOLOGY OVER REMARKS AGAINST MGR

A major controversy has erupted within the South Indian film fraternity following recent comments made by veteran Telugu actor Rajendra Prasad. During an award ceremony honoring the legendary Kantha Rao, Prasad made certain comparisons involving the late actor-politician M.G. Ramachandran, popularly known as MGR. While the veteran actor intended to praise Kantha Rao's immense talent, his specific references to the Tamil icon sparked immediate backlash across the industry, particularly in Tamil Nadu, where MGR remains a deeply revered figure. Prominent actors Vishal and Nassar have now publicly voiced their disappointment, calling for a formal apology. Vishal described himself as "shocked and repelled" by the statements. In a respectful yet firm social media post, he noted that while celebrating one legend is a lovely gesture, it should never come at the expense of another's legacy. He emphasized that MGR was not just a cinema star but a beloved leader whose memory continues to inspire millions of people today. Nassar also released a video statement expressing his personal hurt over the comparison. Speaking as a fellow artist rather than in an official capacity, he urged Prasad to issue a sincere apology from the heart to soothe the wounded sentiments of fans and colleagues alike. Both actors stressed that maintaining mutual respect among legends is vital for the unity of the film industry. As the debate continues to trend online, the fraternity now waits to see how the veteran actor will respond to these growing calls for a public reconciliation.

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